

**National Integratton in Malaysia
The Early Phase (1963-1969)**

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C_O_N_T_E_N_T_S

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P_R_E_F_A_C_E

Problems of national integration are multi-dimensional, comprising of internal as well as external factors. Although these problems have been prevalent right from the emergence of nation-state concept, the Second World War proved to be a major landmark in this field. It is because, while on the one hand the post-war period witnessed independence of a number of Asian, African and Latin American countries, on the other, in this period the concept and practice of 'neo-colonialism' came into being.

Malaysia is also the product of political developments of this period with Malaya becoming independent in August 1957 and forming into a Federation of Malaysia in September 1963. Like most of the Third World countries, Malaysia also had a long legacy of colonial rule, extractive and exploitative nature of trade and industries, imbalanced regional development, distorted demographic structure, communal and linguistic problems and arrested process of economic growth. Situation was further complicated by some other internal elements like the nature and role of Alliance politics, some constitutional provisions (relating to language, religion, citizenship, special privileges for the Malays, etc.). Besides these, external factors like the claim of the Philippines over North Borneo (Sabah) territories and Indonesian opposition to the formation

of the Malaysian federation leading to 'Konfrontasi' also hampered the process of national integration in Malaysia in its early phase.

Economy is, of course, an important internal factor which has hampered the process of national integration in Malaysia. Malaysian economy is not only stratified but also ethnic in nature and character. While trade and commerce are primarily dominated by the Chinese, the Malays are mainly engaged in the field of agriculture. This has led to imbalanced settlement of ethnic groups. While the Chinese and Indians are mainly urban, the Malays are settled mostly in rural areas. Naturally, like in any other country, the alien ethnic groups have enjoyed all facilities available in urban areas, while the Malays have been deprived of these. Recent demands and proposals to give due share to Malays in trade and commerce have alarmed the Chinese communities. On the other hand, Chinese demand for a share in political power has been always negated by the Malays. The expulsion of Singapore from Malaysia in August 1965 and riots in May 1969 are the most vivid manifestations of it. Thus, it may well be said that the economic problems aligned with the problem of sharing of political power constitute the most important obstacles in the path of national integration in Malaysia.

In this dissertation, an attempt has been made to examine various factors (both internal and external) responsible for obstructing the process of national integration in Malaysia in its early phase 1963 to 1969. It has been tried to trace the linkages of such factors in the historical background of Malaysia and to focus trends emerging from the historical perspective.

In the 'Introduction', an effort has been made to find out a suitable theoretical framework to discuss problems of national integration in Malaysia. Problems of national integration have their linkages in the history of the country. The second chapter deals with various historical trends affecting the process of national unity. Formation of the Malaysian Federation in September 1963 witnessed a number of internal as well as external factors obstructing the process of integration. All these have been examined in the third chapter. The expulsion of Singapore from the Malaysian Federation in August 1965 marked the deep-rooted contradictions in the Malaysian society based primarily on ethnic and economic factors. These have been discussed in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter studies in depth factors of national integration from 1965 to 1969. The last chapter gives the conclusion of this study.

I am highly obliged to Dr B.D. Arora, my Supervisor, without whose constant guidance and encouragement this work would not be completed in time. I specially acknowledge my gratitude to late Professor Vishal Singh, my ex-supervisor, who not only encouraged me but also made sincere efforts to cultivate my interest in South East Asian studies which will be a permanent asset to me. I am grateful to Professor Parimal Kumar Das who always expressed a keen interest in my work. I also acknowledge love of my brothers Sri Hemant Sahay and Sri Anant Sahay, without whose affectionate encouragement I could not have gone ahead with this work.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASA	-	Association of Southeast Asia
ASEAN	-	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CPP	-	Chinese Communist Party
DAP	-	Democratic Action Party
EIC	-	English East India Company
FMS	-	Federated Malay States
Gerakan	-	Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (Malaysians People's Movement)
GLU	-	General Labour Union
MCA	-	Malaysian Chinese Association
MCP	-	Malayan Communist Party
MCS	-	Malayan Civil Service
MIC	-	Malaysian Indian Congress
MPAJA	-	Malayan People Anti-Japanese Army
MRLA	-	Malayan Rovees Liberation Army
NCC	-	National Consultative Council
NEP	-	New Economic Policy
PAP	-	People's Action Party
PAS	-	Parti Islam sa-Melayu
PPP	-	People's Progressive Party
UMNO	-	United Malays' National Organization

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem of national integration is, of course, one of the most talked about phenomenon in the present day international politics. This problem has its roots in the socio-economic structure of a particular society, its historical experiences and the prevailing political set up. It is almost a universal phenomenon for all the Third World countries because of their colonial background, which not only distorted the natural growth of these nations but also converted them into satellite societies with arrested process of economic growth, disabled political consciousness, polluted religious feelings and imbalanced social settings.

Malaysia is an important and unique case for the study of national integration not only because it is a new nation and a new society with massive historical burdens, but also because of the fact that it is a society which was exploited to the maximum by the colonial powers. Thus, its present demographic, socio-economic, politico-religious and other correlated problems are very much a replica of their past.

During the colonial period, Britishers encouraged the immigration of Chinese and Indians to Malaya in response to the

labour needs for tin and rubber industries. But these immigrants remained just transient guests, as the Britishers "made no attempt to integrate them with the indigenous community".¹ Similarly, this sort of immigration caused a great imbalance in the field of economy as well. The Chinese and the Indian community lived primarily in urban areas and the Malays, in the rural side. So this way, the demographic imbalance was compounded by economic and commercial imbalance as Chinese and Indians dominated trade and commerce and the Malays, agriculture.² In the field of education the Britishers followed a very pernicious policy. Instead of encouraging Malay language, all communities were allowed to have education in their own language. Besides, English medium education, which was primarily patronized by the non-Malays, was encouraged. This system offered highest rewards to those who assimilated the British culture. It led to an imbalanced growth of the Malaysian society.

Moreover, the role of religion in the Malaysian politics emerged as an important factor. The shape of Islam in Malaysia is not considered the same as in other countries of Asia. Here Islam is far from its dogmatic and fundamentalist appeal. In fact, Islam was imported to Malaysia from India

1 N.J. Funston, Malay Politics in Malaysia (Kualalumpur, 1980), p. 1.

2 Ibid.

and not from the Arab countries directly.³ Despite this moderate outlook in religion, after independence, Malaysia became constitutionally an Islamic country. Hence Islam influences the national as well as social life.

Another factor which has an important say in the Malaysian political system is the role of kinship. The social stratification of Malaysia clearly shows its hierarchical nature. And the nature of politics in Malaysia clearly reflects this social set up. The system of power distribution, socio-economic, religious and ethnic orientations of political parties and their unpredictable behaviour are still a matter of great interest and serious concern. Malaysia too, has a number of noble aspirations of emerging as a modernized multi-ethnic egalitarian society as reflected in the constitution, but it all vanishes while it is tested on the touchstone of hard realities.

Singapore's merger and later on its separation from the Malaysian federation is yet another important factor. The one major issue as it emerged during the period of this study was whether it was to be Malays' Malaysia or Malaysians' Malaysia. The case was finally decided in favour of Malays'

3 B.W. Andaya and L.Y. Andaya, A History of Malaysia (London, 1982), p. 52.

Malaysia. This ethnic basis for making a nation makes the study of national integration more challenging. Moreover, the ethnic chapter was not closed in 1965, it rather stimulated a new dimension in the Malaysian national life. The ethnic crisis became more and more acute and ultimately culminated into the communal riots of May 1969. Thus, a plural society like that of Malaysia, with its underdeveloped economy, unstable political system and imbalanced growth is very much a Third World phenomenon. Therefore, the study of national integration in Malaysia should provide a new horizon for the study of nation-building in Third World countries.

Definitions of Concepts Relating to National Integration

The term 'national integration' has been defined in different ways by different scholars. Myron Weiner explains the term as a "process of bringing together culturally and socially discrete groups into a single territorial unit and the establishment of a national identity".⁴ National integration is also defined as a process or an attitude which seeks an individual's loyalty to nation and state as the ultimate source of status instead of kinship group, village

4 Myron Weiner cited by James Manor in States of South Asia, Problems of National Integration (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt., 1982), p. 89.

or ethnic identity. Thus, it is clear that the process of national integration checks the growing tendencies of regional, linguistic and ethnic loyalties. It emphasizes on social and cultural uniformities.

Apart from social and cultural similarities territorial integrity is also an important element in national integration. It refers to 'establishing national central authority over subordinate political units or regions'.⁵ The establishment of national central authority over subordinate political units does not, however, mean that all the territories should be in one geographical part of land. But it cannot be overruled that a nation should not be separated by another political nation or state [as in the case of Pakistan before the emergence of Bangladesh in December 1971]. It is not merely a strategical pre-requisite but there may arise political anomalies in the two parts of the same nation.

Elite mass integration is another important element for national integration. Unless there is a workable social system - in the present day situation an egalitarian and equalitarian one - this process will always remain unfulfilled and incomplete. Elite mass integration refers to a system of understanding between the rulers and the ruled. It, however,

5 Ibid.

does not mean the disappearance of all sorts of conflicts between these two classes. It rather refers to a workable pattern of authority and its habitual obedience.

'Value integration' is yet another important factor in the process of national integration. It requires a minimum value consensus necessary to sustain a social order. This may include 'ends values' - values concerning appropriate collective goals. It may involve ideas concerning means for the achievement of goals and for resolving conflicts.⁶ In fact, these values are unseen and are seldom manifested. But these are the spiritual basis for a nation to remain integrated. These values shape the nature, linkages, ways of thinking, mode of operation, habits and other inherent abstract tendencies of people of a particular nation state.

The next factor, 'integrative behaviour' may be called an extension of the value integration. It has its own importance because it represents the capacity of the people in a society to organize for some common purposes. In some societies, this capacity tends to be a near monopoly of the elite(s). In others, people throughout the population possess the will and ability to organize with others.⁷ Thus, it is the will of the people to live together, to work together

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

and to keep their system dynamic.

National integration may, thus, be defined as a process to achieve unity among various diversities, to achieve confirmity among various horizontal cleavages based on ethnic, racial, religious, regional, linguistic and other differences and through these unities and confirmities to enable a political system to run smoothly unattached to primordial attachments and sentiments of people even in a backward and plural society.

Various Approaches to National Integration

Here some very relevant questions arise, such as, how do nations grow? Do they really have something biological regarding their development? Is there any predictable pattern of growth for nations as plants and other creatures have in the nature? Is there a fixed criterion for nation-building? These and allied questions have been looked into by various theorists and political scientists from time to time.

Various theories have been put forward to discuss the process of national integration. Among them communication approach, existential approach, sociological approach, leadership approach, economic approach, etc., are considered important.

Communication Approach: Karl W. Deutsch believes there are some definite patterns which are being followed by almost every nation in the process of its integration and building. Although these are not mechanically followed by every nation, however, there are some uniformities in this process what Deutsch would like to call 'essential(s) of national integration'.

Obviously Karl W. Deutsch suggests well developed facilities of communication as the basic requirement for national integration in any part of the world. Apart from communication facilities Deutsch emphasizes other factors like urbanization, the shift from subsistence agriculture to exchange economy, the concentration of capital resources, and the growth of individual and ethnic awareness, all of which he believes as common steps to nationhood that have been present in quite different societies.⁸ Moreover, mere presence of people does not mean the making of a nation. "A nation is the result of the transformation of a people or of several ethnic elements in the process of social mobilisation. Thus far, however, the process of social mobilization and communication have at no time included all mankind."⁹ Thus, it is clear that the main planks of Deutsch's approach are

8 John T. Mc Alister, ed., South East Asia - The Politics of National Integration (New York, 1973), p. 16.

9 Karl W. Deutsch, "The Growth of Nations", World Politics, 5 January 1953, p. 169.

a well developed communicational network and a developed form of economic growth for national integration.

Existential Approach: Rupert Emerson, a famous American scholar, is the profounder of the existential approach. Emerson spells out comparatively fewer number of factors essential for building of a nation, such as territory, language, common historical traditions and what he calls 'intricate interconnections of state and nation'.¹⁰ Emerson emphasizes the fact that nation is a body of people who feel that they are a nation. To Emerson, state is the instrument through which a nation comes into being, and though it may confront irrational human feelings, the state must also bear the ultimate responsibility for a sense of nationality. Emerson further extends the horizon of state as an instrument to provide strength to the institutional existence of a nation.

Sociological Approach: Clifford Geertz provides sociological approach to the process of national integration which states that major limits to national integration arise from the tension between what he calls "primordial sentiments on the one hand and civil politics on the other".¹¹

10 Rupert Emerson, From Empire to Nation (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 95.

11 John T. Mc Alister, n. 8, p. 7.

Clifford Geertz defines primordial sentiments in terms of tribe, region, religious, sect, ethnic group, customary associations, etc. These attachments take an upper hand over civil values and politics associated with newly established states and political systems, trying to govern older societies. Geertz goes into the details and dynamics of these primordial attachments and discovers that such attachments are largely those by birth. But at the same time, they have evolved more certain basis of power and identity inasmuch as they have an immediacy and a predictability proven over years. In this situation, politics becomes primarily a familial affair in contrast to civil politics. Geertz feels the necessity of an integrative revolution which would integrate people into broader cultural ties supportive of national governments. He also feels that without such an integration, disaffection and disunity based on race, language or culture may threaten partition and political disintegration. These complex aspects of primordial sentiments become more complex when they tend to be politicized. And these primordial attachments result into "pluralism, tribalism, parochialism, communalism and the other cliches of commonsense sociology".¹²

12 Clifford Geertz, ed., Old Societies and New States (The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), p. 112.

Leadership Approach: In the newly emerged countries of the Third World, national political leadership has an important role to play. Harry J. Benda supports this view. Their task of bridging the gap between the modern enclaves in their cities and partially modernized world of the countryside. The leadership must find a workable synthesis between the traditional concepts of state and society and requirement for achieving national integration. Thus, the problems of centre versus periphery or urban versus rural are sought to be resolved by the foresightedness of the national leader who in fact, is the architect of a newly-born independent country.¹³

Economic Approach: The economic or Marxian approach has a limited scope to deal with the process of national integration. The advocates of this approach believe that nationalism appears on the one hand as a driving force responsible for the urge of less developed countries to accelerate their economic development by economic planning, and on the other hand, as a major political influence.¹⁴ There are moreover, some other set of scholars who look into the problem from another angle. Their view clarifies that while economy has a big say in the formation of

13 Mc Alister, n. 8, p. 418.

14 Harry G. Johnson, Economic Nationalism in New States (University of Chicago Publication, 1967), p. 1.

a nation, but the motive behind such actions are primarily political in nature.¹⁵

In spite of the fact that these approaches deal with the process of national integration in a quite comprehensive manner, no particular theory fits appropriately to discuss the dynamics of national integration completely. Karl Deutsch's communication approach is quite a developed approach but there remain a number of other factors like the psychological bent of people, cultural values of the society, etc. which are not even touched in this approach. Similarly, Rupert Emerson's Existential approach is also a partial one in the sense that it fails to recognise the importance of national political leadership and sharing of opportunities and power, etc., which constitute significant elements in the process of national integration. Clifford Geertz is much more detailed in his treatment of sociological interpretation of the process of national integration but his mere emphasis on people's sentiments, their attachments to primordial values, etc. obviously lacks the institutional factor which has a major contribution in this process. The leadership approach deals quite in depth with the case of newly independent Third World countries. But it lacks the physical elements like communication. Simultaneously, there are some normative

15 Horace B. Davis, Towards a Marxist Theory of Nationalism (New York, 1978), p. 8.

problems with this approach. This approach is silent over the nature of leadership and it also lacks measures to check the absolutist temperament of national political leadership. The economic theory is quite a partial theory and therefore, it is inadequate to deal with the process of national integration in finality.

In the case of Malaysia, the issues relating to the national integration are primarily concerned with the adjustment of various ethnic as well as economic groups in the process of sharing of power. True, in the Malaysian context, above discussed approaches have their own place, but no one singly deals with the core of the Malaysian situation.

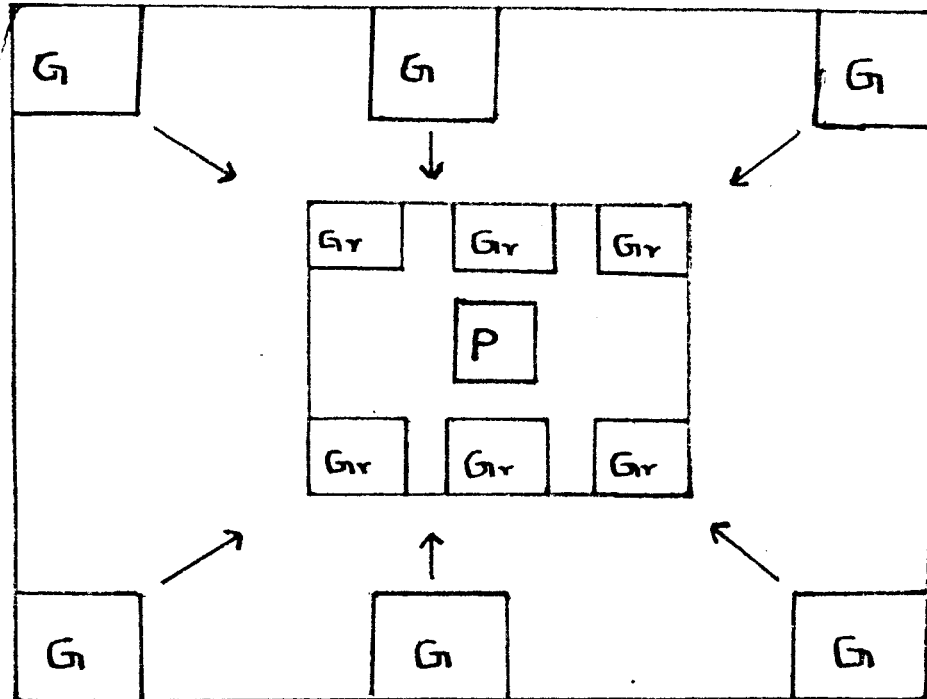
In fact, equitable sharing of power is the essence of national integration in a plural and developing society. The reason is that it is one of the fundamental sources of strength to withstand disintegrating forces in a plural society where primordial attachments are always available to lead to fratricidal conflict rather than to spirit of unity. The process of sharing of power does not simply mean allotting of seats in a cabinet or legislative body, nor does it mean the establishment of new institutions for broader public participation in the political system. It rather means the establishment of new forms of political status and identity shaped by a new concept of politics. Therefore, it is the mobilization of people into the newly intended and predictable

roles and the promise of further mobility in return for increasing the effectiveness of new institutions. But all these are mobilized, and, to a great extent converted into reality through a correct and determined will of the national political leader. Therefore, in a plural society like Malaysia, an approach which deals with adjustment, concession and persuasion, would be more appropriate.

Unanimity Approach: Having gone into details of foregoing theoretical concepts, it seems, none of these suits the peculiarities of the Malaysian situations. In a multi-racial, multi-lingual and economically stratified society like Malaysia, unanimity in these fields would be more appropriate for achieving the national unity. This objective of this approach is to meet the challenges of the problem of national integration in a plural society with all the drawbacks of an underdeveloped economy. This approach first deals with the pattern of -

- (1) distribution of power and authority in the society;
- (2) representation of various groups of the society in the power mechanism;
- (3) use of various means like psychological, physical, etc. for the achievement of integration in the society;
- (4) secular use of values, symbols and cultural aspirations; and
- (5) adequately developed form of communicational network, institutional settings, leadership role, process of economic development, political concessions, adaptations and management.

UNANIMITY - MODEL



* Here power may be of any kind, political, economic, social etc.

In the above model, the figure denotes society. Smaller squares denoting 'G' discuss the presence of various groups in the society. In the middle of the big square there is a small square which denotes the nucleus of power. Here power may be of any kind, social, economic, political, etc. In the power square, there are many small squares denoting 'Gr' which means group representation [ethnic, political,

social, economic, racial, regional etc.] in the society. It shows their representation in power-sharing. In fact, in society, all groups like and try to capture power. But all groups are not represented proportionately in the power nucleus because of -

- (a) The internal weakness of groups
- (b) External pressure of other groups
- (c) Institutional set up of the society
- (d) Traditional linkages and elite hold on power.

These lead to a situation of tension and upheaval. For the unity of the society there should be adequate arrangements, constitutional or otherwise, so that at some particular point of time some particular group may be given concession. For this, there must be adequate place left for this type of arrangement. This adjustment is achieved through persuasion, concession, reservation etc. If all these things are looked into, unity and integrity in a system may be achieved. Otherwise, there may be every possibility of a breakdown.

Malaysia is a plural society with various ethnic groups which have their sectarian and parochial loyalties. It leads to cleavages in the Malaysian society. Particularly after the independence of Malaya in August 1957 and with the subsequent incorporation of far-off places like Sabah and Sarawak in September 1963, this country has led to face some

geo-political problems as well. In Malaysia, the pattern of politics is monarchical. Thus, there is a great controversy over traditionalism versus modernity, religious politics versus secular institutional mechanism. Here ethnic cleavages between the Malays and the Chinese are quite marked. The domination of trade and industry by the Chinese and Indians and of agriculture by the Malays pose yet another problem of integration. In this situation, this 'unanimity approach' may be a very suitable one, an appropriate one to achieve integration and unity in the Malaysian system. Another advantage of this approach is that while other approaches have a tendency to discuss facts either in the past or at the present level and very little of the future, in this 'unanimity approach' if the study is done in detail, a much wider and scientific pattern of study is possible even on the future trends as well.

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CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The problem of national integration has been a common phenomenon for almost all the Third World countries. Pre-colonial tensions were reinforced during the colonial era. Colonial policies also tended to introduce new elements of special tensions. So the British colonial policies made a big contribution to the present-day problems of national integration in Malaysia. The colonial rule was not just an alien system of government. It was a powerful agent of change as well. The colonial rule had its effects on all parts of the Malaysian life,

its administrative structure, economic development, social and ethnic mechanism, educational and legal systems etc.¹

Effects of colonial policies are clearly reflected through demographic structure, economic pattern, educational set-up and communal, cultural and linguistic problems.

Demographic Problem

Among many other problems, demographic structure of Malaysia is a great hindrance to its national integration.

1 John Gullick, Malaysia : Economic Expansion and National Unity (London, 1981), p. 19.

Changes in racial structure are primarily due to the British colonial policy. The British sought a large labour force for mining and plantation work as Malays were not willing to fulfil this demand. The immigration of the Chinese and the Indians over time essentially led to a situation wherein the natives were reduced to half of the whole population.

This demographic problem has another part of the story also, that is the settlement pattern. The Chinese and Indians are by and large urbanites while the native Malays are rural. So, it has affected the settlement patterns and led to the controversy of rural versus urban. 'About half of all the Chinese are urbanites and half of all the urbanites are concentrated in only three urban complexes (Penang, the Kinta valley and Kuala Lumpur).²

Besides the Chinese, Indians also had similar pattern of immigration and settlement. Indians were basically brought into the Peninsular area of Malaysia in the second half of the 19th century. Thus they were heavily concentrated in the west coast, particularly in Perak and Selangor. This immigration was originally from southern states of India speaking Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. About three-quarters of a million Indians who immigrated into the Peninsula between

2 Tal Yul Nam, Malaysia and Singapore - The Failure of a Political Experiment (Thesis, University of Iowa, 1969), p. 54.

1901 and 1940 became labourers in the rubber industry.

Moreover, the immigration of Indians to Malaya was under a planned British scheme to off-set the growing number of Chinese. This is obvious from a dispatch sent by Sir Fredrick Weild to the British Secretary of State in 1887. He wrote: "I am conscious for political reasons that the great preponderance of the Chinese over any other race in these settlements and to a less marked degree in some of the native states under one administration should be counter-balanced as much as possible by the influx of Indians and other nationalities."³ It clearly showed the British motivations behind their labour immigration policy. Results of this demographic change in Malaya were of far-reaching importance. The Chinese and the Indians who immigrated to Malaya in the early years of the colonial rule did not regard Malaya as their home land. They, therefore, naturally did not have any sense of involvement, commitment and identification with the Malays and Malaya as a nation.

Further, the Malays were apprehensive that independence might strengthen and solidify the economic and political power of the non-Malays. Hence their early political activity

³ Cited in J. Norman Palmer, Colonial Labour Policy and Administration: A History of Labour in the Rubber Plantation Industry, 1910-40 (New York, 1960), p. 19.

(in the first half of the twentieth century) was concentrated on defining the Malay position and identity.⁴

It is quite interesting to note that due to multi-racial composition of the Malayan society, the Malays originally preferred Indonesians to the Indians and the Chinese. New efforts were made to re-assert and re-emphasize the broader Malay and Indonesian identity and relationship. In the 1920s the Malay and the Indonesian students at Azhar university at Cairo formed an association called 'Djam'-ah-Chariah al-Talabijja al Azhariah al Djawiah (the welfare Association of Jawa students).⁵ They produced a magazine 'Sernan Azhar (Call of Azhar) the first issue cover of which had a drawing of the globe with South-East Asia in the centre and territory of Dutch Indonesia and British Malaya shaded in black. Besides this was written "the united world of our beloved people".⁶

Another effect of this demographic pattern was the imbalanced growth of the urban and rural areas. The urban

4 Kiran Kapur Datar, Malaysia : Quest for a Politics of Consensus (New Delhi, 1983), pp. 5-6.

5 Ibid., p. 6.

6 Angus Mc Antyre, "The Greater Indonesian Idea of Nationalism in Malaya and Indonesia", Modern Asian Studies (London), vol. 7, no. 1, 1973, p. 75.



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sector, being mainly dominated by the Indians and the Chinese, flourished in trade and commerce, while the rural areas which were predominantly inhabited by the Malays remained away from the scope of economic development and progress.

Thus the process of national integration in Malaysia has been very often slowed down due to these historical reasons. Even at present, these historical occurrences pose great challenges to the process of national unity.

Economic Problem

Along with the demographic set-up of Malaysia, the colonial rule influenced the pattern of economic development. Extractive cash-crops and export-oriented growth have been a British legacy. Despite a comparatively high growth rate of economy, it has always been subject to imbalance. It has been depending heavily on the fluctuating export earnings of a few key products, such as rubber, palm oil, tin and more recently timber and petroleum.⁷ Development of these industries too bears a marked influence of the colonial rule on them. Whatever infrastructure of economy of Malays was developed by the alien rulers, it was done keeping in view their own vested interests. Till 1941, the colonial government provided facilities for communication, made available

7 John Gullick, Malaysia : Economic Expansion and National Unity (London, 1981), p. 141.

agricultural land on attractive terms and essential economic and some social services of a better standard for their own benefit.

It is also important to note that sometimes the government took some positive steps in the field of development, for instance, Krian irrigation scheme (1906) and establishment of some rice mills. But these were not without effects. It led to the establishment of civil services which proved very costly for the natives in the slump period.⁸

It also resulted in an imbalanced growth of economic centres and economic periphery. Further, benefits of essential public services were concentrated in urban centres. The rural areas were not only neglected but also people there were deprived of benefits which were usually available in urban centres. In Malaysia Chinese are mostly urban-based while the Malays live in rural areas. This urban versus rural dichotomy also helped in creating a cleavage between these two ethnic groups.⁹ Obviously, the intentions of the colonial rulers were only apparently altruistic and were mainly attuned to optimal exploitation of indigenous resource. This affected the small peasants and industrialists very adversely.

8 Ibid., pp. 142-43.

9 Ibid.

The colonial linkages of the Malayan economic system separated various ethnic groups so much that, from time to time, it resulted into communal tensions and even clashes. The communal tension that arose as a result of the rural development could be easily understood within the context of the occupational patterns of the communal groups.¹⁰ Quite often it is held that the erosion of traditional economic loyalties in relation to the political authority breaks down the mutual relationships. And this breakdown leads to the process of disintegration in the society. The British economic policies in Malaya also led to this type of situation.

British policies did not only disrupt the traditional economic pattern, they also gave a great shock to the power pattern. "No longer was the Malay ruler seen as providing the services and protection to his subjects in return for the latter's labour and loyalty."¹¹

This way, the colonial experience of Malaysia rendered the country economically dependent and crippled. It also hampered a lot the process of national integration in Malaysia as it created cleavages between the two main ethnic groups, the Chinese and the Malays. And in Malaysia this

10 Tal Yul Nam, n. 2, p. 65.

11 Barbara Watson Andaya and Leonard Y. Andaya, A History of Malaysia (London, 1982), p. 219.

sort of economic disability might be traced back to Malaysia's historical experiences.

Educational Problems

Education is, of course, one of the essential factors for promoting national integration of any country. But the unequal and inadequate education in Malaysia is the result of the colonial policies towards education. Although in the near past, there has been a tendency of shift in educational patterns and programmes, still, like other Third World countries, Malaysia has not fully freed itself from its colonial experiences. The identification of ethnic group with a specific economic function affected early colonial policy towards education. Only a small elite had been given the privilege of an English education to equip them for clerical duties within the colonial government bureaucracy or in European - controlled companies.¹²

During the colonial period, it was widely though informally accepted reality by the aliens that the vast majority of the local people should be provided education, if at all, in their own language so that they may continue to be attached to their allotted role in life. "If put crudely, the European was to govern and administer, the immigrant

12 Ibid., p. 222.

Chinese and Indian to labour in the extractive industry and commerce, and the Malays to till the fields."¹³

For a well-developed and institutionally strong nation, universal education is a pre-requisite. But far from encouraging education, the Britishers even discouraged it in their colonies. Malaysia was not an exception. Further, social stratification on the basis of education is an important contribution of the British rule in Malaysia. A national system of education clearly requires that there should be a common syllabus and common teaching material in the form of textbooks. Moreover, this material should be Malaysian and not alien.¹⁴ But this was not the case with the English education in Malaysia.

It is argued by some scholars that the English education provided some sort of social unity. Barbara Andaya is of the view that "a distinctive feature of English education in the Malay Peninsula was the mixed ethnic composition of the classes. The shared aspirations of the students and the conformity to certain ideals imposed by the English school system helped create a bond which to a considerable extent overcome some of the differences of ethnicity and social background."¹⁵

13 Ibid., p. 222.

14 John Gullick, n. 1, p. 226.

15 Andaya and Andaya, n. 11, p. 230.

However, the reality is different. First, the number of students who were allowed to attend English schools was too few to influence the society effectively. Secondly, most of the Malays lived in rural areas so whatever facility was available, that was enjoyed mainly by the Chinese and the Indians and not by the native ethnic group. Thirdly, the role of religion can also not be exaggerated in the sense that the Malays' reluctance to be associated with any religion except Islam was obvious and well-known.¹⁶

It is, therefore, clear from the foregoing analysis that far from providing unity, the British educational policy created big cleavages in the society. Thus, the process of national unity was very adversely affected by it.

Communal, Linguistic and Cultural Issues

The most distinctive appearance of Malay communalism is manifested through the Malays' claim as 'Bumiputra' (son of the soil). Along with it are special privileges that they have always insisted on claiming for themselves. As constitutionally defined, the Malay identified as a person who professes the Muslim religion, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay customs, and was before Merdeka day born in the Federation or in Singapore or born of

16 Ibid.

parents one of whom was born in the Federation or in Singapore is on that day domiciled in the Federation or in Singapore, or Federation of Malaysia.¹⁷

For the Malays, loyalty to the country is understood as personal allegiance to the King, the *Yang-di-Pertuan Agong*, rather than toward a nebulous and abstract concept of a unified Malaya.¹⁸ Quite interestingly in Malaysia loyalty is directed more towards a person than the institution of state or nation. 'The *Yang-di-Pertuan Agong*' in turn ensures the reservation of special privileges for the Malays in the public services, scholarship awards, exhibitions, and license permits in trade and business as he is empowered to do so by the federation's constitution.¹⁹

From this point of view, loyalty expressed by the Malays is based on their sense of cultural belonging and also on political reasons - the latter being less significant than the former. However, it is obvious that the non-Malays render largely political loyalty, unlike the Malays, to the state and to the person *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*. This difference

17 Art. 160 of the Malaysian Constitution.

18 Norton Ginsberg and Ctiester F. Roberts Jr., Malaya (Washington, 1958), p. 495.

19 Art. 153 of the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya.

creates gulf in the psychological unity of the people. This has been the result of cultural perception and difference of views backed by socio-economic and other objective realities. It naturally culminated into hostilities of one ethnic group against other.

Another cause of these increasing hostilities between the Malays and the Chinese may well be looked into through historical incidents. The British efforts to decentralise the institutional activities weakened the Malay authority. Previously the Malays had been traditionally getting weightage in public services and occupying almost all the key posts under the Britishers. It was now changed by the Chinese endeavour to increase their participation in the governmental activities.²⁰

The situation became more grave by the census of 1930s clearly revealing the fact that for the first time in British Malaya there were more Chinese (1,709,392) than Malays (1,644,173).²¹

Economically also the situation was getting worsened. The worldwide depression of the 1930s hit the Malayan economy adversely. The export-oriented economy now became more competitive which naturally led to ethnic

20 Andaya and Andaya, n. 11, p. 236.

21 Ibid.

confrontation. The worldwide economic depression of the 1930s hit the economy of almost all countries. Malaya was no exception. The effects of the economic depression resulted into greater competition among the ethnic communities in Malaya because first, the nature of the Malayan economy was export-oriented and secondly, agro-based economic activities had been dominated previously by one group or another (trade and commerce by the Chinese, agricultural products by the Malays).²²

The situation was aggravated during the Second World War. The Japanese occupation enflamed the situation against the Chinese. The anti-Chinese feeling among Malays was further encouraged by the Japanese who used para-military units composed mainly of Malays to fight Chinese resistance groups.²³

This way, it is quite appropriate to look at the communal violence of the post-war Malaya as a logical result of diverse ethnic programmes and policies, plans and attitudes which were adopted over a long period of colonial rule and reached a peak owing to existing social realities in the 1920s and 1930s.

22 Ibid., pp. 251-2.

23 Ibid., p. 237.

There are, moreover, some special characteristics of the two ethnic groups. The Malays are believed to be loyal, polite and proud. The Chinese are held to be self-possessed, the Malays headstrong and erratic. The Chinese are believed to be self-reliant while the Malays rely upon government assistance and protection - a result of spoon-feeding of colonial protection.²⁴

In fact the Malay privileges were recognized by the Britishers, but these privileges proved to be the cause of backwardness of the Malays. In the process as the Chinese and the Indians went faster, the Malays naturally became vehement critics of these ethnic groups.

Apart from these communal tensions which hampered the path and processes of national integration in Malaysia to a very great extent, there are many cultural and linguistic problems also which were of the same nature and consequences. Communalism in Malaysia is rooted not only in cultural differences but also in political and social distinctions.²⁵

Many Chinese immigrants have entertained themselves with a feeling of cultural and racial superiority to Malays

24 Goyle D. Ness, Bureaucracy and Rural Development in Malaysia (Los Angeles, 1976), p. 46.

25 Tal Yul Nam, n. 2, p. 47.

and Indians.²⁶ Thus, it is quite difficult for them to learn and understand the Malayan feeling, commitment and loyalty. This had been made more difficult by the wealthy Chinese demand for more and more political power in accordance with their economic achievements and status.

Besides, the Chinese and Indians brought with them their culture to Malaysia. It added a new dimension to the existing problems because Indians had been very particular in maintaining their separate identity regarding cultural activities. It made the Malays more irritant. These cultural cleavages were rooted so deep in the psyche of various ethnic groups of Malaysia that no group ever wanted to show an assimilative tendency on its part and this posed a great obstacle in the process of national unity of Malaysia.

There is no denying the fact that unity and integrity of a nation is the most important aspect of national life. But a nation of numerous cultures needs a new aspiration of unity to provide adequate psychological adjustment to every other trait of culture. It has also been the experience of history that a nation's unity has been achieved without cultural assimilation, for instance, in the case of Switzerland, which is a nation without a national language and without a particular national culture.

26 Lucian W. Pye, Guerrilla Communism in Malaya (Princeton, 1956), p. 207.

Language has also proved to be a great obstacle in the process of national integration in Malaysia. While the Chinese and the Indians are proud of their culture and language and insist on the acceptance of their own languages for national and official purposes, the constitutional provisions go in favour of Bahasa Malaysia.

Thus, it may well be said that history has posed a number of problems in the process of national integration in Malaysia. Demographic problem is the outcome of the British colonial policies and along with the demographic imbalance, the economic sectarianism which was encouraged by the Britishers, continued to be conducive to the imbalanced economic growth in Malaysia. On the one hand, arrested process of economic growth has been a natural consequence of the underdeveloped economy of Malaysia. On the other, ethnic nature of trade, commerce and agriculture is a great obstacle to the national unity of Malaysia.

The Japanese Occupation

During the war, the British had virtually failed to mobilize the Malay Sultans and the people against the Japanese. Their only success was in establishing contacts with the Malayan People's anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) with the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) dominated by the Chinese providing the core of it. The role of the MPAJA and the MCP

as a "stay behind" party to protect the British colonial interests against the Japanese also led to embittering the Malay sentiments against the Chinese. Their activities in the jungles against the Malays (and Indians) who collaborated with the Japanese left a trail of bitterness.

During the Japanese occupation the Japanese anti-China postures led to a degree of mobilization of the Malay and Indian people in favour of their South-East Asian policies. This had decidedly an ethnic dimension and thus reinforced ethnic tensions in Malaya. Obviously, the Japanese occupation of Malaya also helped in widening the gap between the Chinese and the Malays. This ultimately proved a great obstacle in the process of national unity in Malaya. Thus policies towards the Malays were ambiguous. While on the one hand they transferred four Malay-dominated northern states of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Trengganu to Thailand, on the other, they promoted some Malays to higher posts, even higher than those posts which the Malays occupied under the British. The Japanese also encouraged the Malay nationalist movement which they hoped to keep under control.²⁷

Post-War Developments

Certain elements of the Malayan Union proposal brought out by the British in 1944 were conceived by the

27 R.S. Milne and D.K. Manzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia (Singapore, 1978), p. 22.

Malays highly detrimental to their interests. These included proposals to abolish sovereign rights of the Malay Sultans, and offer of easy terms of citizenship for non-Malays. The Malayan union proposal was opposed by the Malays while it was welcomed by the non-Malays communities. The Malayan union plan was vehemently opposed by the rulers and all sections of the Malay society. The Malays under the leadership of Dato Onn bin Ja'afar asserted their identity and a Pan Malayan Malay Congress was held which ultimately recommended the creation of United Malays National Organization (UMNO),²⁸ on 11 May 1946. The UMNO took up the challenge and with the help of the Sultans mobilized the Malays against the Malayan Union Plan. This represented the first major manifestation of national political aspiration of the Malay community. The pressure grew to such an extent to impel the British to withdraw the Malay Union Plan.²⁹ Consequently, a new concept of Federation of Malaya came into being as a result of negotiations between the British government, the Malay rulers and UMNO. In this federation, sovereignty of Sultans, individuality of states and Malay special privileges were upheld. A strict citizenship provision (requiring at least 15 years residence). However, this Federation was a contribution

28 Ibid., p. 28.

29 Andaya and Andaya, n. 11, p. 256-7.

to sharpen the ethnic cleavages in Malaya. This time, while the Malays greeted it, the Chinese in particular felt betrayed and began to find their new aspirations in the promises of MCP. Thus it was a step to create yet another factor obstructing the unity of Malays.

The Emergency

The year 1948 came as new development in the history. During the Japanese Occupation Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was active in MPAJA which was disbanded in 1945. In 1948, the Communists resorted to armed violence, which led to the imposition of emergency lasting for 12 years.³⁰ MCP had been trying to capture power since the return of the British in September 1945. They could not succeed. First, because MCP guerrillas were small in number and ill-equipped. Secondly, the British with 100,000 troops had no hesitation in crushing the Communists. Thirdly, the Communist parties in Britain and China had urged the MCP to adopt a moderate policy.³¹ Main reason behind the 'direct action' of the Communists was stated to be their failure to penetrate and control the trade unions by peaceful means.³²

30 Milne and Manzy, n. 27, p. 31.

31 See Andaya and Andaya, n. 11, p. 257.

32 Milne and Manzy, n. 27, p. 31.

In the first year of Emergency, MCP guerrilla forces succeeded partially. By 1949, however, the MCP almost lost its initiative as they had to retire to forests without any major source of help. In October 1951 MCP adopted a new programme of action emphasizing subordination of military activities to political goals. But the situation did not seem to be encouraging for this change. Their new programme coincided with the emergence of an alliance between UMNO and MCA in 1952. It seemed to work successfully. And thus, the MCP gradually lost its hopes for gaining power.³³

Independence

In April 1949 the government declared its intention in the Parliament to grant independence to Malaya. However, political developments in 1952 in Malaya, such as the emergence of Alliance composed of UMNO and MCA, were very encouraging for the British. Political activities of MCA were encouraged by the British to check the MCP. The incorporation of the Malayan Indian Congress into the Alliance as a full-fledged partner in 1954 was supposed to be a positive political development in the country. At the first general election in July 1955, the Alliance won a massive victory, winning 51 out of 52 seats.³⁴ Thus, the formation of Alliance marked a step

33 Ibid., pp. 32-33.

34 Ibid., p. 34.

towards the consolidation of unity of Malaya. It manifested a degree of co-operation between major ethnic groups. Thus the Alliance became an instrument of national integration of Malaya.

The 1957 Constitution

The victory of Alliance in 1955 followed a constitutional conference in London in early 1956. The Alliance worked hard and months of deliberation on ticklish issues like language, citizenship, special status of the Malays etc. among the components of Alliance There was hard bargaining among three ethnic groups. In this context, proposal prepared by the Alliance became a major document for the Constitution. The language provisions were concessions to the Malays while the citizenship provisions went in favour of the non-Malay communities. These provisions with certain necessary modifications representing an interesting/potentially conflicting sectarian interests were finally included in the Constitution of independent Malaya.³⁵

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Independence (Merdeka) was announced on 31 August 1957. The Constitution also came into force on that day. Apart from other characteristics of the Constitution, the most interesting feature is reflected from the 'Bargain' between

35 Ibid., p. 37.

UMNO and MCA, 'and which set out the political framework, or rules within which the racial groups are to operate'.⁴⁶

The decision that from 1967, Malay language would be the sole official language might be the result of Malay bargain to the relaxation in citizenship provisions to the Chinese. Thus from the point of view of national unity, the Constitution of 1957 marks a new age. Article 153 (Special Privileges to Malays) may be as the result of bargain of citizenship provisions which was advantageous to non-Malays. Although the Constitution has undergone more than 25 major amendments, however, it is a means to express the wishes of people belonging to various ethnic groups, thus, consolidating the national unity.

Developments Since 1957 to 1963

The Alliance had been in power since 1955 and it witnessed a great achievements in 1957, the independence of Malaya and the adoption of a new constitution. In their search for compromise, the Alliance partners made concessions to others to secure concessions.

36 Ibid., p. 38.

The existence and emergence of new political parties like the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP), Party Negara (PN), People's Progressive Party (PPP) and demands of such parties made the situation very complex and complicated. In the general election of 1959, the situation of the Alliance became rather weak. In local government and state assembly elections held between 1957-59, the Alliance had lost ground mainly in urban areas. In 1959, Tunku Abdul Rahman temporarily resigned from prime ministership to devote his time in rural areas where Alliance could face challenge from PMIP and PN.³⁷

The Alliance as a whole did not do very well in 1959 election. Still it emerged as the largest party, capturing 74 out of 104 seats. But its share of votes came down to 51.8 per cent as compared to 81.7 per cent in 1955. UMNO lost seats to PMIP in predominantly Malay areas. After the elections, a new wave of energy and faith was tried to be restored. A ministry of rural development was established under the Control of Tun Abdul Razak to give momentum to the programme of general improvement and economic aid in predominantly Malay areas.³⁸

37 John Gullick, n. 1, pp. 115-16.

38 Ibid., p. 117.

During the period 1957-63, remaining Communist forces were reduced to very minor strength. A new dawn of the formation of the Malaysian Federation was set in. [The formation of the Malaysian Federation has been dealt with in a separate chapter.]

...

CHAPTER III

FORMATION OF MALAYSIA

Making of a nation is an event of great importance in history. But very often it happens in such a way that the whole process seems just a part of historical evolution. The formation of Malaysia in September 1963, too, marked the culmination of events which had been taking place for the last two decades. However, sometimes the role of an individual leaves an imprint on the ultimate events. And here was the Malayan Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, who figured prominently in the process of formation of Malaysia.

The concept of Malaysia was first of all mooted by the Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman during a speech delivered in Singapore on 27 May 1961. It is said that Tunku Abdul Rahman was persuaded by the British to promote the idea of Malaysia because there was possibility of a pro-communist [Barisan Sosialis] taking over in Singapore. Further the Britishers also wanted to withdraw from South East Asia with all their prestige intact.¹ Many scholars, however, do not accept this plea for the making of Malaysia. According to

¹ Stanley S. Bedlington, Malaysia and Singapore: The Building of New States (New York, 1978), p. 103.

Pushpesh Pant, "However well the Malaysia plan may have suited the British interests, there is little evidence to show that it was their brain-child. Tunku's idea did not evolve from earlier British plans for the integration of these territories in the post-war years but was inspired by more recent political developments (specially in Singapore). The Malayan-Singapore diplomacy in winning over the territory to Malaysia and in the attempt to counter the Indonesian and the Philippine opposition also illustrates in its success and failures, that Malaysia plan was conceived and executed without any promoting from some external source."²

This plea for making of Malaysia seems more sound because on the side of Malaya also there was an equally important possibility that the Malayan Government too, did not like in any way the establishment of a communist-controlled Singapore in so close a neighbouring area and in so close a strategic position.

Tunku was very clear in his thinking that ethnic problem would be the most dangerous one for the federation. He therefore said: "We should think of a plan whereby these territories can be brought together in political and economic co-operation. This will not be possible if the Chinese start to think and talk of everything Chinese. The Malays will be

2 Pushpesh Kumar Pant, The Making of Malaysia, 1961-63 (Thesis, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1970), p. 188.

made to think nervous, if they do of their presence as Chinese and not as Malaysians. The Chinese are a practical people and as such must think clearly ahead. Above all, Malaysia must be the sole object of their loyalty."³ It was, moreover, as much a warning to the Chinese on the question of their loyalty as the Tunku's clear vision of ethnic dimension.

On the other hand, the Malayan leadership would not be ready to accept the Chinese-dominated Singapore as a part of their nation unless British Borneo territories were included in order to counterbalance the Chinese of Singapore.

The Borneo Territories

Before 1961, when the proposal for Malaysia was mooted, not much was known in Malaya about Sarawak and North Borneo (latter called Sabah). These territories are larger than peninsular Malaya having a combined area of 78,000 sq. miles compared with the latter's 51,000 sq. miles. But the population in 1960, 454,000 for North Borneo and 744,500 for Sarawak, was less than one-fifths of Malaya's. In national income per capita the Borneo territories were not too far behind Malaya. According to Rueff Report (1963), in

3 Cited in Bedlington, n. 1, p. 103.

1961 annual per capita income in Sarawak was about M\$ 550 and in North Borneo M\$ 700 compared with about M\$ 800 in Malaya and M\$ 1300 in Singapore.⁴

Besides, the political situation in these territories was quite peculiar. In the beginning, leaders of these territories reacted very adversely to the Tunku's proposal. However, with the passage of time and with the visit of Malayan leaders to these territories, most of them began to support the proposal except the predominantly Chinese Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) which opposed the plan to the last.⁵

The next problem in this direction was to persuade the Borneo people to agree to the Malaysian proposal. It was to this end that a joint commission was appointed by the British and the Malayan governments under the chairmanship of Lord Cobbold, Governor of the Bank of England.⁶ The Cobbold Commission travelled throughout Sabah and Sarawak to meet the inhabitants of these territories and know their viewpoints. The Cobbold Commission in its report issued in July 1962, stated that a majority of inhabitants of British Borneo favoured Malaysia. The Commission based its findings on the following evidences:

4 R.S. Milne and D.K. Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia (Singapore, 1978), p. 44.

5 Bedlington, n. 1, p. 104.

6 Ibid.

- (a) About one-third of the population in each territory (almost entirely Muslims) strongly favoured early realization of Malaysia without too much concern about terms and conditions.
- (b) Another third (mainly educated non-Muslims and Chinese) many of them favourable to Malaysia project, asked with varying degrees of emphasis, for conditions and safeguards.
- (c) The remaining third was divided between those who wanted independence first and those who wanted the British rule to continue for some years.⁷

Soon after this report was issued there were repercussions in Indonesia and the Philippines. Indonesia protested because it considered the proposal for Malaysia a "neo-colonialist" plot. The Philippines claimed the territory of North Borneo as belonging its own. This led the Malayan government to request the United Nations to send another commission to Sabah and Sarawak to confirm or disprove the findings of the Cobbold commission.⁸

The new commission visited Borneo in August and September 1963 and reported its findings to U Thant, UN Secretary

7 Ibid., p. 105.

8 See Milne and Mauzy, n. 4, pp. 60-65.

General, on 14 September 1963. Having received the report, the UN Secretary General clearly indicated that the majority of inhabitants of these territories were in favour of the Federation of Malaysia.⁹

Apart from external opposition there were various internal elements also which opposed the proposal for the new federation. Thus, Malaysia could not be formed on 31 August 1963, as planned the day marking the anniversary of independence of Malaya in 1957. The Indonesian and Philippine objections resulted in postponement until September. Further, another attempt to prevent the formation of Malaysia came from the state of Kelantan on 10 September, when it instituted a legal action to get the Malaysian plan declared null and void. In the last Kelantan wanted at least the Malaysian plan not to be binding on it. But this action did not succeed and ultimately Malaysia came into being on 16 September 1963.¹⁰

On joining the new Federation, Sabah and Sarawak were offered very favourable terms. Sarawak was allocated twenty four seats in the federal parliament and Sabah sixteen. Further, special safeguards and guarantees were granted to these territories. It was also agreed that the native

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., p. 66.

people of these territories would be awarded special privilege as Malays enjoyed in Malaya.¹¹

Brunei

Brunei was, of course, one of the Borneo states which was invited to join the Malaysian federation. Historically, the Sultanate of Brunei had been cut to a small size. But the Sultan still enjoyed vast autocratic powers over his subjects. The Sultan also tried to establish a constitutional government in Brunei and for it a new constitution was promulgated in 1959. It was on the basis of this constitution that elections were held in 1962. Initially the Sultan was reported favourably disposed towards the idea of the Malaysian federation. But the situation in Brunei underwent a drastic change when a young Brunei Malay, A.M. Azhari, sought to restore the former glory of Brunei by reuniting its former lands now held by North Borneo and Sarawak.¹² Thereafter, the whole situation changed very rapidly. Azhari hoped to include Indonesia and the Philippines in his plan of 'Greater Malaysia' with Brunei as its centre. He contacted political groups in North Borneo, Sarawak, Singapore, Malaya, Indonesia and the Philippines. Azhari was reported to have received secret

11 Bedlington, n. 1, p. 106.

12 Barbara Watson Andaya and L.Y. Andaya, A History of Malaysia (London, 1982), p. 273.

financial and material help from Indonesia and the Philippines, the two nations opposing the Malaysian Federation. Moreover, failing to secure adequate help from the Brunei court, Azhari planned to take over power through revolt. His revolt of 7 December 1962 was, however, suppressed by the British troops. Azhari himself escaped detention since he was safe in Manila.¹³

The revolt in Brunei led to a number of consequences. Although the casualties in the revolt were minimal, the political consequences were of great significance. In the British Borneo, there were arrests of hundreds of leftists and their supporters. The most significant consequence of this revolt was the refusal of the Sultan of Brunei to join the Malaysian Federation. However, other reason for the Sultan of Brunei not joining the Malaysian Federation should not be underestimated. During these rapid changes, the Sultan became disinterested in the Federation plan because he found that some constitutional and financial arrangements would ultimately weaken his own position. By joining the federation, the Sultan of Brunei would have to agree to share his state's substantial revenue from oil resources. Further, while living alone and independent, the Sultan enjoyed more senior position. By joining the federation he would have to sacrifice his trade

13 Ibid.

benefits and personal privileges. So ultimately, the Sultan decided not to join the Malaysian federation.¹⁴

Indonesian Opposition to Malaysia : Konfrontasi

In the beginning, Indonesia was not opposed to the plan for the Federation of Malaysia. The foreign minister of Indonesia, Subandrio, in the course of his speech in the General Assembly of United Nations on 20 September 1961, stated that Indonesia had told Malaya "that we had no objection to such a merger based upon the will for freedom of the peoples concerned".¹⁵

It is important to note that notwithstanding the fact that Indonesia's initial reaction to the proposal for Malaysian Federation was of "no objection", it was not without caution. It was this caution which at the time of revolt in Brunei in December 1962 provided a justification for the Indonesian policy of confrontation with Malaysia. The Government of Indonesia was, of course, watching the situation very carefully before taking any definite stand on the issue of Malaysia.

14 See Bedlington, n. 1, p. 108.

15 Official Records of the General Assembly (GAOR), session 16, plen. mtg 1058, vol. 1, 20 November 1961, pp. 718-19; also quoted by Vishal Singh, "The Struggle for Malaysia", International Studies (Bombay), vol. 5, July 1963-April 1964, p. 236.

Indonesia's approach at this stage was mainly because of three reasons. First, Indonesia was preoccupied with the West Irian issue. Secondly, it feared that any negative reaction in Djakarta (now Jakarta) against the Federation of Malaysia would hamper the efforts that were being made to secure Western (particularly US) support in negotiating with the Dutch a favourable settlement of the West Irian question. Thirdly, Indonesia "desired to keep up with the general expectation in the United States that after the West Irian issue was resolved to Indonesia's satisfaction, it would give priority to economic development".¹⁶

It is, therefore, quite interesting to note that as soon as Indonesian-Dutch Agreement on West Irian was signed on 15 August 1962, Indonesia showed a marked shift in its attitude towards the Malaysian plan. Indonesia supported the Brunei Revolt led by A.M. Azhari due to two reasons - ideological and strategic. Ideologically, to Indonesia the revolt in Brunei represented opposition to British colonialism. So they were very critical of the use of force by Britain to suppress the revolt. They, therefore, regarded it as their "moral duty" and "a matter of principle" to give all kinds of support to "the

16 M. Van der Kroef Justus, "The West New Guinea Settlement : Its Origin and Implications", Orbis, vol. 7, no. 1, spring 1963, p. 139, quoted by B.D. Arora, "India, Indonesia and the Emergence of Malaysia", International Studies, vol. 18, no. 4, October-December 1979, p. 565.

independence struggle of the Kalimantan Utara (North Borneo) people" against British colonialism. Strategically, the merger of Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah in Malaya was seen as a threat to the security of Indonesia. It was because, according to British-Malayan Defence Agreement of 9 July 1963 (Agreement relating to Malaysia), Britain was supposed to maintain bases in Singapore and discharge defence and peace responsibilities in South-East Asia as ever before.¹⁷

Another reason for Indonesian opposition to the formation of Malaysia was the Chinese factor. Once formed, Malaysia would "promote Chinese influence rather than stem it".¹⁸ Further PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia) was very much critical of the Malaysian plan from the beginning, and called the plan as "Neo Colonialist". Observing the government's as well as PKI's joint opposition to the Malaysian plan other major political parties like Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI), the Nahdatul Ulama (NU) and other small political groups, too, began to oppose the Malaysian plan.¹⁹

Apart from these reasons, Soekarno also wanted a new foreign adventure which would provide his armed forces (the

17 See The Republic of Indonesia Publication, Why Indonesia Opposed British made Malaysia (Djakarta, 1964), pp. 57-58, cited in Arora, *ibid.*, p. 568.

18 S. Nihal Singh, Malaysia : A Commentary (New Delhi, 1971), p. 69.

19 See Arora, n. 16, p. 570.

support base of his regime) an opportunity to show their strength. The deteriorating economic situation of Indonesia also needed a new direction of events where the attention of the Indonesian people could be diverted. Further, during the Japanese occupation of South East Asia (1942-45) Soekarno had found a great support from the Malay nationalists to create a 'Great Indonesia! Malaysian Federation seemed to put Soekarno's aspirations of a regional role in a cold storage. The fear of breaking away of outer islands like Sumatra and its joining the Malaysian Federation might also not be ruled out as a factor for Indonesian opposition to the Malaysian Federation.²⁰

Ultimately, the policy of Konfrontasi came to an end in September-October 1965 when President Soekarno was removed from the scene and a new regime under General Suharto came to power. The new regime followed another course of action, a policy of non-confrontation and mutual understanding.

Philippines' Opposition

While the proposal for Malaysian federation was mooted, the Philippines also opposed it due to some internal and external reasons. In early 1962, the Philippine President Diosdado Macapagal raised his opposition to the Malaysian

20 John Gullick, Malaysia : Economic Expansion and National Unity (London, 1981), p. 110.

federation on the ground that North Borneo properly belonged to the Philippines. The Philippines claimed that the original 1878 transfer of territory of North Borneo from the Sultanate of Sulu was not in a form of sale but in the form of lease. This Filipino claim was reinforced by the fact that there were evidences of regular annual payments from the Company to the Sulu Sultan.²¹

In the beginning the Malayan Government did not take the Philippine case very seriously as it understood this claim to be motivated by domestic political considerations and developments in that country. However, as time passed, the Philippines became more insistent on its claim. Now Malaysia had no option but to react very strongly to this Filipino demand. The Malaysians made it clear that in no case would they compromise on the North Borneo provinces.²²

Whatever the merits of the Filipino claim, their articulation led to an embitterment of previously amicable relations between Kuala Lumpur and Manila. Normal diplomatic relations became very cold for some time, regional co-operation became a casualty and an element of suspicion remained on both sides for quite some time.²³

21 Andaya and Andaya, n. 12, p. 274.

22 Ibid.

23 See Bedlington, n. 1, pp. 109-10.

Besides, there were some other reasons also which led to this development. The Philippines Government apprehended that Sabah under the Malaysian rule would be turned into a centre of communists and therefore, it would adversely affect the southern part of the Philippines. Both Indonesia and Philippine had some very deep concern about the relatively tolerant treatment by the Malaysian Government to its very large Chinese community. They treated the Chinese as representing forces of "neo-colonialism".²⁴

Simultaneously, both the Philippine and Indonesia considered British bases and Malaysian association as well as relations with Britain as a matter of great concern. Further, the Malaysian conflict with the Philippines was primarily at diplomatic level. However, this conflict was resolved to a great extent after Presidential election in the Philippines in mid-1965. It was found that President Marcos did not support the Philippine claim over north Borneo strongly. In the beginning, domestic pressures prevented him from any approval of this policy, but by June 1966, the Philippines extended recognition to Malaysia.²⁵

Thus, it was clear that the Indonesian and Philippine opposition was partially due to their claims over some territories

24 John Gullick, n. 20, p. 111.

25 See Andaya and Andaya, n. 12, p. 275.

which were to be incorporated into the Malaysian Federation and partially due to their own domestic political and strategic interests and considerations.

Owing to these deteriorating relations between Malaysia and the Philippines and Malaysia and Indonesia, an arrangement was made for these three heads of states to meet in Manila in July-August 1963 in order to reach a settlement. At this conference both Indonesia and the Philippines announced their desire to recognize Malaysia provided the support of the people of Borneo was ascertained by an independent and impartial authority, the Secretary General of United Nations or his representatives.²⁶

As a result, the UN Secretary General sent his team of investigations to Borneo within a few days of the end of the conference in Manila. It completed its task within a month as expected. However, the Tunku was so confident of the verdict in his favour that he fixed the date for the establishment of Malaysia at 16 September 1963, even before the findings of the UN team were made known.²⁷ This was bound to create adverse reactions in both Jakarta and Manila.

In these adverse circumstances Malaysia was formed. Besides the dangers posed by external factors to the integrity

26 Ibid.

27 See John Gullick, n. 20, p. 112.

of the newly born federation, the threats to its unity arising from internal forces were rather more disturbing and dangerous. It was due to these internal forces that the first setback to Malaysia came just within two years of its formation when Singapore was separated from Malaysia.

Making of Malaysia and Problems of National Integration

Seeds of the problems of national integration were present in the complex process of the formation of Malaysia. Ethnic problems were of acute nature as just for making a nation two different ethnic groups, the Malays and the Chinese, with different socio-economic, cultural and religious background were brought together. Naturally, the ethnic problem was to raise its head sooner or later. And it did so which ultimately culminated in the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965.

On 16 September 1963, Malaysia came into being. With Singapore joining the new Federation, it naturally affected the elections of 1964. The People's Action Party of Singapore came as a contestant into the elections. It came out with the slogan of a "Malaysians Malaysia", representing equality for all, the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians in the federation. The results of 1964 elections showed the emergence of the Alliance as a strong party as it captured 89 parliamentary and

240 state seats. While the PAP got only one parliamentary seat and no state seats.²⁸ The PAP wanted to bring rift in the Alliance. Lee Kuan Yew and other PAP leaders told at many gatherings that MCA was not serving the interests of the Chinese rather it was sacrificing the Chinese interests by giving special concessions to the Malays. This made the situation very tense. And ethnic antagonism between the Chinese and the Malays became very sharp. It raised a hot debate on sensitive issue concerning equality of all races, citizenship and special privileges of the Malays. The big victory of the Alliance was also because it succeeded in capitalising People's sentiment while the newly born Malaysia was with confrontation with Indonesia and Philippine.²⁹

The Singapore leadership under Lee Kuan Yew always emphasized "equal opportunities for all, not based on birth or rank, in order to build a just and equal society".³⁰ But Malays were not ready for it while people like Syed Ja'afar Albar saw it as a challenge, to the Malays moderate leaders like the Tunku who also emphasized "special rights" for Malays.³¹

28 Kiran Kapur Dattar, Malaysia : Quest for a Politics of Census (New Delhi, 1983), p. 21.

29 Ibid., p. 21.

30 Lee Kuan Yew, The Battle for a Malaysian Malaysia (Singapore: Ministry of Welfare, 1965).

31 See Kiran K. Dattar, n. 28, p. 23.

So it was obvious that the national integration in Malaysia was very much jeopardized due to this ethnic consciousness and demands. Ultimately, "Malays Malaysia" and not "Malaysian Malaysia" got triumphed and Singapore was expelled from the Malaysian Federation in August 1965.

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CHAPTER IV

ETHNIC CLEAVAGES AND SEPARATION OF SINGAPORE

Since 1945 most of the world's conflicts have been internal and not across frontiers. According to Robert S. McNamara, "between 1959 and 1966, out of 164 outbreaks of violence of international significance, 149 (over 90 per cent) were internal and only 15 (under 10 per cent) between states."¹ These internal conflicts have been the result of political, economic, religious and sometimes even ethnic cleavages in the society. The ultimate outcome of such conflicts have been sometimes very serious, in some cases breaking up a nation into two separate political entities. The breaking up of India into two separate nations, India and Pakistan (August 1947), of Malaysia into Malaysia and Singapore (August 1965) and of Pakistan into Pakistan and Bangladesh (December 1971) are some important instances in recent years. However, the situations have differed from nation to nation, while in the case of India, it was religion which played the most dominant role in separating a part which became Pakistan, in the case of Malaysia, it was the unbridgeable ethnic cleavages between the Malays and

¹ Richard Clutterbuck, Riot and Revolution in Singapore and Malaya, 1945-63 (London, 1973), p. 17.

the Chinese that led to separation of Singapore in August 1965, while in the case of Bangladesh it was political and economic factors and to some extent the parochial attitude of national leadership which resulted in the emergence of Bangladesh in December 1971. Besides these apparent reasons for the breaking up of some states, there are always some behind-the-scene activities of influential personalities aligned with other environmental causes like constitutional provisions, partial and parochial attitude of the government, etc.

In the case of Malaysia, however, the situation was a little different. It is generally accepted that the ethnic differences led to the separation of Singapore. It was the "fear of widespread communal violence which prompted the leaders of Malaya to face the exist of Singapore from the Malaysian Federation".²

Situation Leading to Singapore's Exist

From the very beginning of the formation of the Malaysian federation, Singapore had been an uncomfortable partner. The situation developed in a way that the Malaysian federation, somehow or other, was not in a position to keep strict control over Singapore. Therefore, towards the end of 1964, there was a frequent talk mostly by the Tunku himself of a

2 V. Suryanarayan, Singapore-Malayan Relations (Ph.D. Thesis, Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi, 1968), p. 241.

relatively "looser arrangement than the prevailing one. The main purpose of such talks was to provide more autonomy to Singapore so that she could handle her own domestic, financial, economic and social affairs".³ Thus, naturally the Federal government would retain powers regarding only defence and internal security. Moreover, the question of a "possible looser arrangement" should be distinguished from more ambiguous reference to "alternative arrangements" made by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore from May 1965 onwards. Indirectly, of course, Lee had mentioned Singapore, Sarawak, Sabah and of course, Penang and Malacca for 'Malaysian Malaysia'. Of course, Lee himself did not mention the term 'partition' but some of his critics alleged that there was an element of this in his demand.⁴ Although Lee Kuan Yew demanded "Malaysian Malaysia", he never demanded the separation of Singapore from Malaysia. Rather, his opinion was to make the Malaysian society just and egalitarian.

There could be another way to defuse the tension between the Federation and Singapore by 'admitting Singapore's representative in the cabinet'. It was initially suggested by Sir Alec Douglas Home, a former British Prime Minister and was

3 R.S. Milne and D.K. Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia (Singapore, 1978), p. 74.

4 Ibid.

also demanded by Lee in 1964. But this proposal was also turned down by the Federal Government and thus, a politically sound alternative was rejected. Thus, there seemed no other option than the separation of Singapore from the Malaysian Federation. In one of his speeches the Tunku clearly pointed out the fear of ethnic violence. To him, it appeared that 'as soon as one issue was resolved, another cropped up. When a patch was made here, a tear appeared elsewhere, and where one whole was plugged, other leaks appeared.'⁵

Factors Leading to Separation

There were a number of causes of Singapore's exit from the Malaysian Federation. According to Fletcher, these problems were just not one-to-one in nature but of course, of complex and ambiguous nature.⁶

Economic Factors

Economic and commercial factors were of such nature that there was very little possibility of an understanding in such an uncompromising situation. Even before the proposal of Malaysia Federation, the Singapore government had decided to industrialize the country as there were not enough economic

5 Tunku Abdul Rahman (Speeches), cited by Milne and Mauzy, *ibid.*

6 Fletcher Mc H. Nancy, The Separation of Singapore from Malaysia (New York, 1969).

support to meet the required needs. Following the formation of the Malaysia Federation in 1963, Singapore Government went ahead with its programmes. Simultaneously, an industrial expansion programme was carried out in the Peninsular Malaysia. There was a need for coordination for these processes. Lack of it led to misunderstanding, suspicion and confrontation.

On the question of common market, there was little progress. It led to frustrations in Singapore and made Singapore to realize that its economic interests were not duly protected in the federal set up.

Further, by the Malaysia Agreement [Annex J, 3(3)]⁷ until December 1968, it was proposed that the federal government would obtain consent of the Singapore Government before the imposition of new import duties. But in the federal budget of 1965, Singapore leaders alleged that new taxes were raised without consulting them. And thus the terms of agreement were violated.⁷

In February 1965, a new reminder of federal powers was given to the businessmen and industrialists of Singapore that before opening of any new industrial plant, they would have to take prior permission of the federal government on "tariff protection and the grant of preferential treatment though

7 Milne and Mauzy, n. 3, p. 68.

being given pioneer status."⁸ It led to further suspicion among the Singaporeans against the federal government.

It is notable that even after the formation of the Malaysian Federation in 1963, the competition in manufacturing and exporting goods between Singapore and the peninsular Malaysia did not come to an end. In some respects, it rather became more fierce and politicized because of existing political overtones. Further, in the Malaysian agreement [Annex J. 6] the Singapore government was empowered to collect customs and excise duties and income tax in its territory. It was also mentioned that there would be a distribution of such amount in which 60 per cent would be taken by Singapore and 40 per cent by the federal government. In 1964, new financial arrangements were proposed whereby the distribution of such amount would be 40 per cent to Singapore and 60 per cent to the federal government. These proposals made the situation more "explosive" and "dangerous".⁹

The situation deteriorated as there was lack of consensus on economic priorities and politics. The economic interests of Singapore and Malaysia were so different that the process of national integration was sure to be hampered and a separation was but inevitable.

8 Goh Keng Swee cited in Straits Times, 2 December 1964.

9 Milne and Mauzy, n. 3, pp. 68-69.

Political Factors

Besides economic factors, there were numerous political factors which hampered the process of national unity and ultimately led to the separation of Singapore from the Malaysian Federation. In fact, the political rivalry between People's Action Party (PAP) and United Malays National Organization (UMNO) was rooted so deeply that any sort of reconciliation was not possible in that situation.

PAP had always pursued a policy to drive a wedge between UMNO and MCA. This became more than obvious in the 1964 elections in peninsular Malaysia. PAP strategy to break UMNO-MCA alliance, however, failed and thus it led to political frustration among the PAP leaders. The deteriorating political situation in Singapore came as a fatal blow to the sinking environment. The Alliance alleged that after the formation of the Malaysian federal system Malays in Singapore felt themselves "neglected and despised". The Alliance leaders expected the government to improve their lot. 'But the state government of Singapore made no provision for special treatment of any one particular race or community. They, therefore, felt aggrieved.¹⁰

10 Tunku Abdul Rahman, Speech in the 17th General Assembly of UMNO, Kuala Lumpur, 6 September 1964; quoted by Milne and Mauzy, n. 3, p. 69.

UMNO's loss of three seats to PAP in the Singapore Legislative Assembly Elections in 1963 made UMNO more critical towards PAP. While Lee Kuan Yew invited over a hundred Malay organizations to discuss problems of the Malays, an UMNO-sponsored convention went for boycotting this meeting and further, constituted an action committee to raise the voice of the Malays and to deal with the Singapore Government in the future.¹¹ It was, of course, one of the most unfortunate incidents in the sense that, in a way, it closed the doors of political negotiation between the Singapore government and the native Malays in Singapore.

Highly provocative political speeches by UMNO leaders, primarily by Syed Jaafar Albar at the occasion of UMNO sponsored convention (which had decided to boycott the meeting invited by Lee Kuan Yew) in 1964¹² against the PAP made the situation very explosive and ultimately it resulted in riots. It was a great challenge to the political authority as upheaval in the society affects the political stability very much. It was indeed a fatal setback to the unity of Malaysia. Thus, it was sure to damage the process of national integration in the recently formed federal set up. Moreover, the rioting¹³ situation was made more complicated by the alleged Indonesian involvement in riots.

11 Milne and Mauzy, n. 3, p. 70.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

Another political factor which helped in complicating the situation was the emergence of PAP in such an aggressive form in the Peninsular Malaysia. It was very much like "free trade in politics", and thus PAP activities were watched with suspicion by UMNO. PAP Government did not follow the Tunku's advice that the Singapore Government should concentrate less on politics and more on making Singapore "The New York of Malaysia".¹⁴

Social Factors

The social composition of Malaysia was so diverse that any separatist movement would cost heavily if not tackled intelligently and with real political will to preserve unity of the nation. The ethnic composition of the Malaysian society was very imbalanced. The Singapore leadership constantly emphasized the obliteration of all racial differences. Many of Lee Kuan Yew's speeches and declarations both at home and abroad always emphasized equal opportunities and equalities in other social spheres for all without any discrimination of birth, rank or race, for making a just and equal society.¹⁵

Further, while Lee Kuan Yew pointed out the ethnic structure of the Malaysian society as being about 40 per cent

14 Lee Kuan Yew in Malaysian Mirrors (Kualalumpur), 6 March 1965.

15 Kiran Kapur Datar, Malaysia : Quest for a Politics of Consensus (New Delhi, 1983), p. 23.

Malay, 40 per cent Chinese and 20 per cent others, it became a matter of great concern and anxiety for the Malay leaders. They entertained apprehensions of being reduced to minority in their own homeland. But Lee went ahead in his demand and mission to get accepted the demand for "Malaysians Malaysia" as against "Malays' Malaysia".¹⁶

Language Factor

Language is a significant factor in the process of national integration of a country. Language is at the same time a cult-ural legacy and a means of communication among various ethnic groups. It is important to note that with the rise of nationalism the language question has often been one of the main problems faced by the nationalist movements in the process of national unity.

In the case of multi-ethnic society in Malaysia, before independence in 1957, English was the sole language used for administrative purposes. After 1957, however, the situation underwent many changes. The Constitution provided: "The national language shall be the Malay language and shall be in such script as parliament may by law provide."¹⁷ It also ensured that no person shall be prohibited or prevented from

16 Lee Kuan Yew, The Battle for Malaysians Malaysia (Singapore: Ministry of Culture, 1965).

17 Art. 152(1) of the Federal Constitution (Kualalumpur, 1984).

using, teaching or learning any other language. According to Art. 152(1) Malay language was made the national language and according to Art. 152(2) English could be used in both Houses of Parliament in the legislative assembly of every state and for all other official purposes.¹⁸ However, the use of the Malay language as a means to consolidate the unity had been recognized by various committee reports, such as Education Review Committee known as Razak Report (1956) and Rahman Talib Report (1960).¹⁹

As regards language policy, the period of the study could be described as a moderate period from 1957-69. During this period Tunku Abdul Rahman was the Prime Minister, a person with a moderate attitude on the issue of language. During this period English had its dominance and in fact, the Federal government did not follow any active national language policy.²⁰

The second stage may be called as radical Malay nationalism period from 1969 onwards. The 13 May 1969 is cited as a watershed in this field. The then minister of education, Tan Sri Yaakob, announced his intention to carry out the three great tasks of -

18 Ibid., Article 152(2).

19 Tan Ta Sen, Language Policy in Insular South East Asia : A Comparative Study (Singapore, 19), p. 9.

20 Ibid., p. 10.

- (1) Carrying out a National Education Policy with Malay as a Medium of instruction;
- (2) Establishing a national university with Malay as the medium of instructions; and
- (3) Raising the status of the Islamic College to that of Islamic University.²¹

The Education Minister further announced in 1970 that in National Primary schools Malay Language will be the medium of instruction and by 1981, all subjects would be taught in Malay and by 1984 even higher learning would also be in the Malay language. It is moreover, important to note that this policy could not meet any challenge because of the sedition act of 1969 which prohibits discussion of sensitive issues even that of language also. In fact, due to the emergence of 'Bumiputraisim' Bahasa Malaysia has become a national symbol. Now using Bahasa Malaysia is the means of uniting people of various ethnic groups. Further, the assertion of the use of Bahasa Malaysia has become a symbol of Malaysian nationalism. It is also supposed to be the most efficient means to propagate the Malaysian culture and lastly, loyalty to Bahasa Malaysia is considered loyalty to Malaysia as a nation itself.²²

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., pp. 10-11.

So, it is obvious that a rigid assertion of Bahasa Malaysia has become a strong factor in the process of national integration. But the Chinese adherence to their language along with other minor groups also, is still a big problem in the process of spiritual unity of Malaysia.

Some Constitutional Provisions

Some provisions in the constitution instead of promoting unity in the federation, in the time of crisis proved disuniting. These related to Singapore's powers and functions were markedly different from those meant for the peninsular Malaysia.

Provisions relating to citizenship for Singapore were very complex. When the federation of Malaysia was proposed by the Tunku, it became a matter of vehement criticism and debate between the Singapore government and the political opponents. The problem arose from the fact that the constitution of the Federation made the acquiring of Singapore citizenship far more difficult than it was before Singapore's merger with Malaysia. According to new provisions, only two-thirds of the Singapore's adult citizens could qualify. Naturally these provisions were bound to create a lot of problems and dissatisfaction among the Singaporeans. This arrangement was viewed as a discrimination

against the Chinese.²³ On the other hand, the main argument by the Peninsular Malaysia was that if those qualifications for Singapore's citizenship were not kept strict then Singapore's politicians and voters might move into the Peninsular Malaysia and would have upset its political balance.²⁴

The other constitutional provisions which proved ticklish were related to the economic powers of the units of the Federation, especially, of Singapore. Annex J 3(3) related to the consent of Singapore Government in levying new import duties etc., Annex J (6) related to the powers of Singapore Government to collect taxes and income tax. The fourth schedule Part II [9th schedule, lists IIB and IIIB] related to the powers and functions of the Singapore government etc. created a lot of troubles between the Federation and Singapore. Fourth schedule, Part II (Ninth Schedule, Lists IIB and IIIB) were related to Constitutional provisions like language, education, labour etc. It would have been politically **suicide** for any Singapore Government to have attempted to conform to the Malayan pattern of education removing the state-subsidized secondary education in Chinese. Similarly Singapore's labour laws were more favourable to workers than peninsular Malaysia.²⁵

23 Milne and Mauzy, n. 3, p. 64.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

Constitution of a federation is supposed to be an important instrument for keeping the federal structure dynamic and mobile, united and integrated. The constitution of the federation of Malaysia, on the contrary, itself created a lot of difficulties which hampered the unity of the federal structure.

It is moreover, important to note that wherever a constitution is blamed for the separation or failing to keep people united, it is commonly found that it is not the constitution that fails but it is the people who are supposed to preserve the constitution, fail in preserving the constitutional spirit and dynamism. In much the same way no doubt, in the Malaysian Constitution, some provisions were complex, but a great deal of blame should go to some Malaysian and Singapore leaders who, owing to their sectarian loyalties, failed to follow the true spirit of constitutionalism.

Personal Factor

In the disintegration of a nation into two parts, the role of leadership has always been quite significant. The role of M.A. Jinnah in the separation of Pakistan from India and in much the same way, the role of the Malaysian political leaders like Tunku Abdul Rahman, Lee Kuan Yew, Dato Syed Jaffar Albar and Tun-Tan Siew Sin cannot be underestimated in the separation of Singapore from the Malaysian Federalism in August 1965.

Among the PAP leaders there was real hatred of the 'Ultras' in UMNO particularly of Dato Syed Jaffar Albar. Lee Kuan Yew was generally distrusted among UMNO leaders. On the other hand, the Chinese community in Peninsular Malaysia did not have genuine faith, On the UMNO leaders. About Lee Kuan Yew it is said that he had a very strong ambition of becoming the Prime Minister of Malaysia.²⁶ The Tunku later commented that there had been a certain inclination on the part of some countries to consider Singapore as with equal status and partnership in the Government of Malaysia. And this made the situation all the more complicated.²⁷

Thus, it is clear, personal ambitions, personal antagonisms too helped much in the path of separation of Singapore from the Malaysian federal system in August 1965.

Singapore's Exit and National Integration of Malaysia

The exit of Singapore from the Malaysian federation was not a minor event. It marked a phase in the national life of Malaysia. It was an event primarily based upon ethnic cleavages and divergent aspirations among different groups of people in the society. By May 1965 under the cumulative effect

26 Milne and Mauzy, n. 3, p. 73.

27 Ibid.

of various factors the situation tended to be explosive and it seemed virtually impossible to run the federation with Singapore.

It is, however, notable that the way Singapore was compelled to leave the federation, was an alarming one for the non-Malay communities in Malaysia. It became all evident that the much talked about slogan 'Malaysians' Malaysia' (given by Lee Kuan Yew) was not acceptable to the Malays. This became obvious particularly after May 1969 riots that if peace and stability was solicited, the Malay paramountcy was to be accepted without fail.

Another fall-out of the separation of Singapore was that it settled once for all the problem of political leadership in Malaysia. Now, there would be virtually no challenge to political leadership of Malays.

The role of ideology which is a great factor for the national integration of a country cannot be free from its social linkages. In the case of Malaysia and Singapore factors like race, ethnic groups, personalities have always shadowed the element of ideology.²⁸ Malaysian experience revealed this and eventually led to disruption of the federation. Besides, conflict of interests also played an important role in the Malaysian case "conflict of interests made each intolerable to

28 Mahathir Bin, The Malay Dilemma (Singapore, 1970), p. 183.

other". The conflict of interests led to the conflict of personalities "which affected the thinking of leaders on both sides of the case way".²⁹

Malay / The event of separation of Singapore has been looked upon by many observers in different ways. T.J.S. George, a keen observer of developments in the world, is of the view that though Lee Kuan Yew had supported the merger proposal very much, he never gave any chance to Malaysia. According to him, the Singapore Prime Minister put the Malays too hard; "had he pitched his campaign on octave or too lower, he could have been more effective."³⁰

Mahathir Bin Mohamad is of the view that communal approach of political parties also played an important role in this event. According to him, the secular or communal character of the party should not be measured only by what it said but by what it did in reality. But unfortunately political parties in Malaysia did not play the role of uniting the people.³¹

29 Ibid., p. 184.

30 T.J.S. George, Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore (Singapore, 1975), p. 86.

31 See Mahathir Bin Mohamad, The Malay Dilemma (Singapore, 1970), p. 178.

To sum up, it may well be observed that the incorporation of Singapore in the Malaysian Federation in 1963 itself was an uncomfortable experience. Subsequently, its expulsion from the federation in 1965 represented a deep-rooted racial antagonism. The Malaysian experience, however, provides a lesson for the study of national integration in the sense that, for all practical purposes, there are more than one cause or event that could be ascribed for the separation of a nation into two parts. Thus the study of national integration becomes more important in the case of Malaysia in post-1965 period. It also provides an ideal example for the newly-born third world countries as it deals with many complex issues and factors.

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CHAPTER V

PROBLEMS DURING 1965-1969

Like other third world countries, the issues relating to national integration in Malaysia have been very sensitive. Right from the making of the Malaysian federation in 1963, these issues have continued to exist. In fact, they had been existing even before the formation of Malaysia, but after 1963, they became more acute. The process of making of Malaysia, of course, itself was a very problematic and complicated one. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the roots of problem were present in the very process of the making of the Malaysian federation. While going through the study of national integration of Malaysia, it would be apt to discuss such factors.

There were various elements which created obstacles in the path of national unity in Malaysia, like ethnic, economic, demographic, social and constitutional etc. It is not to suggest that Malaysia alone has suffered from these aspects in the process of achieving national unity. Almost all the countries of South East Asia in particular and of the Third World in general have been suffering from these problems. However, it would be apt to discuss these aspects here only in the context of Malaysia and thus to find out the relationship between these elements and the process of national integration of Malaysia.

Demographic Factor

Demography is one of the most prominent factors in the process of national integration. In the case of Malaysia, out of other important factors, it occupies a prime place. The incorporation of Sabah and Sarawak created a lot of problems. Out of Malaysia's total geographical area of 127,581 sq. miles, Sabah occupies 28,775 sq. miles and Sarawak 48,050 sq. miles. Thus put together, these two territories are far greater than the peninsular Malaysia which has 50,806 sq. miles in area. Besides, there are serious communication difficulties in both these territories. In Sarawak, apart from the availability of air travel, the other major means of communication is river-waters which are quite muddy and which flow north-west into the south China Sea. Thus, by virtue of their north-west direction, they cut off almost all possible means of land communication.¹

So far as development of these territories was concerned, undoubtedly, as compared with the Peninsular Malaysia, they were backward in many respects. In 1963, only about 25 per cent of the population in above 10 years of age group were literate as compared with Malaya where this percentage was

¹ R.S. Milne and D.K. Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia (Singapore, 1978), p. 451.

over 50. Further in Sabah and Sarawak, out of these literate people, over 50 per cent people belonged to the Chinese community. Among the rest, only about 17 per cent natives were literate. This low percentage of literacy was undoubtedly, a great drawback of these places. Thus naturally, it arrested the pace of development and growth.²

Ethnic Factor

Apart from the geographical setting, the ethnic structure of Malaysia also posed a great challenge to the process of national integration in the country. According to Malaysia census report published in 1970, no. 14, in 1957 Malays were 49.8 per cent, Chinese 37.2 per cent, Indians 11.3 per cent and others 1.8 per cent. In 1965, the Malays increased up to 50.1 per cent, the Chinese 36.8 per cent and Indians 11.1 per cent. In the 1970 census report, the Malays were 53.2 per cent, Chinese 35.4 per cent and the Indians 10.6 per cent.³ In peninsular Malaysia, the ethnic composition was such that non-Malays put together became numerically larger

2 Ibid. pp. 45-46.

3 Census Report No. 14. Adopted from Table 1.3, p. 3 estimates from Monthly Bulletin of the States of Malaya, September 1966 and 1970. Population and Housing Census of Malaysia, 1970.

than the Malays. In 1968, out of a total population of 8,465,000, the Malays were 4,221,000 in number while the Chinese were 3,076,000 and Indians were 982,000 in number.⁴ This number has been on the increase. The situation in Sabah and Sarawak territories have been more alarming. In Sabah the Malays were only 38 per cent of the population while in Sarawak only 26 per cent. The non-Muslim natives in Sabah constituted 42 per cent. The population of the Chinese in Sabah was about 20 per cent and in Sarawak 28 per cent.⁵

Obviously, the ethnic composition of Malaysia was such that it would inevitably lead to various problems. *↳ to* Moreover, the position and status of the Chinese had been so *entertaining* dominant in trade and commerce that it was quite natural for *fears of* Malays *being* in their own homeland. This psychology on the part of *dominated* the Malays eventually aggravated the existing ethnic cleavages and led to clashes.

Before becoming Prime Minister of Malaysia Mahathir Bin Mohamad discussed these ethnic differences very accurately. He pointed out the difference of value systems of the Malays, Chinese and Indians. He was of the view that these differences

4 Estimated Population at mid 1968, Malaysia, Annual Bulletin of Statistics (Kualalumpur, 1970).

5 Milne and Mauzy, n. 1, p. 46.

had led to 'prevalence of many ideas concerning racial stereotypes', that the Malays were 'happy-go-luckily and easy going', the Chinese on the other hand were 'shrewd and hard working' while the Indians were 'conscientious but lack initiative'.⁶ Mahathir also noted some other alarming differences as well. "The Malays and the Chinese may live as neighbours. They may meet each other in their daily business and even socially, but when they retire, they retire into their respective ethnic and cultural sanctum, neither of which has ever been truly breached by the other. And in their own world their values are not merely different but are often conflicting."⁷ This clearly reflected the nature of Chinese cultural exclusiveness which kept them apart from the Malay community.

Racial conflict was not unnatural for Malaysia. No doubt ethnic confrontation is one of the most striking obstacles in the path of national integration. And quite unfortunately, Malaysia had to witness a constant ethnic problem. Mahathir was of the view that in Malaysia there has never been ethnic harmony notwithstanding the fact that there was occasional accommodation. He observed: "There was a certain amount of give and take. But there was no harmony.

6 Bin Mohamad Mahathir, The Malay Dilemma (Singapore, 1970), p. 5.

7 Ibid.

There was in fact cacophony, muted but still audible. And periodically the discordant notes rose and erupted into isolated and widespread racial fights."⁸ In this way, Mahathir was very clear in his approach while he analysed the racial behaviour and inter-racial relations. He argued that in Malaysia racial harmony was "never real and deep rooted". Though there was time when absence of strife could be seen, but interestingly, he argued absence of strife was "more frequently due to lack of capacity to bring about open conflict".⁹

Obviously, the demographic and ethnic problems had grown to be so acute in nature that they were always great obstacles in the path of national unity of Malaysia. Thus both these factors could not be underestimated in a study on Malaysia. While the location of far-off places like Sabah and Sarawak had genuinely created geo-political problems, the ethnic composition of the Malaysian society was something which may be said to be the hereditary one for Malaysia.

Some Constitutional Provisions

Constitution is an element designed to consolidate the unity of a nation. Quite ironically, however, the Constitution of Malaysia had some provisions which always

8 Ibid., pp. 4-5.

9 Ibid., p. 5.

caused the raising of eyebrows of some sections of people of this country. Constitutional provisions relating to religion, special privileges for Malays, the national language, etc., were not easily acceptable to all. 'Islam is the religion of the federation.'¹⁰ No doubt, all the Malays are Muslims. Hence, this provision does not create any problem for them. But apart from the Malays, a big portion of the population, almost half, is non-Malay and thus non-Muslims. Notwithstanding the constitutional provision that 'other religions may be practised in peace and harmony in any part of the federation',¹¹ Malaysia could not be treated as a secular state, as Islam has been declared as the religion of the federation constitutionally. This was bound to have a psychological effect on non-Malays.

Further, regarding the national language the Constitution clearly stated: "The national language shall be the Malay language and shall be in such script as parliament may by law provide."¹² Language is such an emotional factor that it attracts the attention of the people very quickly. Although, as a matter of habit, even Chinese and Indians speak Malay

10 Art. 3 of the Federal Constitution (Kualalumpur, 1984).

11 Ibid., Art 3.

12 Ibid., Art. 152(1).

language, by nature although, they are oriented to their own mother language which is obviously not Malay.

The demand for special status of 'Bhumiputras' (sons of the soil) is duly recognized. "It shall be the responsibility of the Yang-di-Pertuan Agong to safeguard the special privileges for the Malays."¹³ This provision is a matter of great concern to non-Malays. Thus it is obvious that even certain constitutional provisions too, have become serious issues in the process of national integration of Malaysia even in between 1965-1969.

The May 13, 1969 Incident

Under the leadership of the Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Malaysian Federation survived a number of internal and external challenges such as Indonesian confrontation, Philippines' claim over Sabah, Singapore's exist from Federation etc. But the Alliance governments ability to divert the attention of people to external factors proved temporary. As the ever present problem of ethnic cleavages emerged strongly, the situation became almost uncomfortable for at least some time. 13 May 1969 was not just a sudden incident. There was a long tradition of dissatisfaction,

¹³ Ibid., Art. 153(1).

suspicion and mistrust, behind this incident. The whole incident was just not the result of a procession that 'in a multiracial, multilingual and multireligious country which for twelve years had enjoyed racial harmony and co-operation, that tolerance and understanding could be so abruptly terminated and the various races should suddenly glare at each other and reject a way of life that apparently began long before independence.¹⁴

The Federal elections of 1969 were fought on very emotional issues like education and language. These issues were matter of great concern as these were to decide the role of ethnic groups in the new Malaysian nation. In the 1969 elections there was no external factor for the Alliance parties to capitalize on. This election was based on domestic policies, identity, assertion and the nature of the polity.¹⁵ Therefore, each ethnic group sought to visualize the election as a means of preserving its interests against the encroachment of the other. Moreover, as the result of elections were declared, it came as a blow to the ruling alliance notwithstanding the fact that the Alliance was still the majority party in the

¹⁴ Mahathir, n. 6, p. 4.

¹⁵ B.W. Andaya and L.Y. Andaya, A History of Malaysia (London, 1982), p. 280.

Dewan Rakyat (the lower house of the Malaysian Parliament), though its strength had dwindled from 89 seats in 1964 to 66 in 1969. The percentage of votes was also lower this time, just 48.8 per cent as compared to 58.4 per cent in 1964. The Gerakan, Democratic Action Party (DAP), and People's Progressive Party (PPP) won 25 seats while 12 seats went in favour of Parti Islam sa-Melayu (PAS).

On 13 May 1969, just a day after the election out of jubilant mood, the Gerakan and DAP people took out victory procession in Kuala Lumpur to celebrate the occasion. The UMNO staged a counter rally. It unfortunately turned into an uncontrollable violence throughout the city. It could be described as Malay reaction to the prospect of losing political power. It also showed the fragility of the political framework called Alliance once ethnic tensions growing from Alliance policies got aggravated.

However, it is said that this unfortunate incident could have been avoided. The Tunku is on record as having regretted that he allowed the election to proceed. "I was too proud", he observed, "I felt so sure I was going to win easily...what I should have done (in the light of reports I was receiving) was to suspend that election, declare a state

of emergency and allow time for everyone to cool off."¹⁷

Moreover, by the time elections took place people of various sections were 'disenchanted with the government'. The Malays were dissatisfied because they thought, the government was continuously favouring the Chinese community because it failed to check the concentration of wealth in the hands of the Chinese. And in this process, the Malays antagonized the non-Malays, especially the Chinese.¹⁸

While commenting on May 1969 riots, Mahathir observed very aptly: "What went wrong? Obviously a lot went wrong. In the first place the government started off on the wrong premise. It believed that there had been racial harmony in the past and that Sino-Malay co-operation to achieve independence was an example of racial harmony."¹⁹ According to Mahathir the government was wrong in its calculation as it thought the Chinese to be interested only in business and acquisition of wealth, and on the other hand that, Malays were interested in political power and bureaucratic posts.

All these miscalculations led the government to underestimate the gravity of the situation. Thus, the gulf

17 Ibid.

18 Tunku Abdul Rahman, Far Eastern Economic Review, 2 August 1974, p. 22.

19 Mahathir, n. 6, p. 13.

between the government and the people went on widening. Ultimately it widened so much that the government could not appreciate the changes that were taking place in the society.²⁰

It is, however, important to note that the outcome of this incident was mainly the reality which lay behind the scenes so far since the formation of Malaysia in 1963. That was the establishment of unquestioned Malay paramountcy in the society. An effort was made to restrict the scope of political discussions and controversy and secondly, 'the economic position of the Malays was to be improved'.²¹

Many new institutions were established in order to secure the unity and integrity of the nation. National Goodwill Council (NGC) was created under which there were thirteen state councils and numerous local committees all over Malaysia. Through these institutions, the Tunku wanted to restore goodwill throughout the country.

Among other organizations which were set up after 13 May 1969, the National Consultative Council (NCC) was one of the most important. Its main purpose was to establish 'positive and practical' guidelines for inter-racial co-operation

20 Ibid., p. 15.

21 Milne and Mauzy, n. 1, p. 83.

and social integration for the growth of the Malaysian national identity.²² It was a widely representative body and its achievements were through committees.

The Development of National Unity (DNU) was instituted to help the government in "galvanizing the country guiding it towards national unity".²³ Of course, an important duty of DNU was to draft a national ideology which was presented to NCC and was approved. The King issued a proclamation on it on 31 August 1970. Though it did not become a part of the constitution, it nevertheless was to guide Malaysians of all races in their everyday affairs in a conscious effort to bring about a single united and strong Malaysian nation.²⁴ 'Rukunegara' as it was titled, stated: "Our nation Malaysia, being dedicated to achieving a greater unity of all her peoples, to maintaining a democratic way of life, to creating a just society in which the wealth of the nation shall be equitably shared; to ensuring a liberal approach to its rich and diverse cultural traditions; to building a progressive society which shall be oriented to modern science and technology."²⁵

22 Ibid., p. 89.

23 Tan Sri Ghazali Strafil, Straits Times (Malaysia), 16 July 1969.

24 Malaysian Digest, 4 September 1970, p. 3.

25 Andaya and Andaya, n. 15, p. 281.

The five principles of the Rukunegara were as follows:

- (1) Belief in God
- (2) Loyalty to King and Country
- (3) Upholding the constitution
- (4) Rule of Law
- (5) Good behaviour and morality.

The spirit behind these principles which was expressed on the occasion of the proclamation of these principles was that Malaysia should be a genuine multiracial nation. That all Malaysians should dedicate themselves to work the parliamentary democratic process and renounce force and violence as a means of political struggle. That it is the duty of every Malaysian to contribute to the abolition of the economic imbalance between the haves and have nots and between the urban and rural areas.²⁶

Thus, it is obvious that May 13 incident sets a new dimension to the process of national integration in Malaysia, while it proved that peace and harmony in the society was possible only if the Malay predominance was accepted and secured. It also opened a new door for further economic development of the Malays. Various institutions which came

²⁶ Erick Lim Kit Siang, Straits Times (Malaysia), 19 October 1970.

into being after the May 13 incident, consolidated the unity and integrity of Malaysia. Change in the governmental approach towards various social, politico and economic problems also prepared the path for proper functioning of the Federal system of Malaysia.

Thus, while May 13, 1969 is a landmark in the recent history of Malaysia it is simultaneously a starting point to look at the dynamics of society with a more real and practical approach. Thus the process of national integration while touched an apex in one sense in May 1969, another new dimension for the national unity was added to this process on that day.

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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In a multiracial society like Malaysia, the process of national integration cannot be achieved in a mechanical manner. What is essentially needed on the part of society is the creation and promotion of a consensus for better understanding in various walks of life, be it political, economic, social, etc. The Malaysian society is an old and developing one. Quite naturally, it has a number of primordial attachments and sentiments having fixations in the psyche of the people. Therefore, any effort to examine priorities regarding civic, modern and scientific approach in place of these generations-old value systems, must be done very cautiously.

Sharing of power (political, economic etc.) is the main problem in the process of national integration of Malaysia. A multiracial country like Malaysia requires unanimity in various fields like pattern of distribution of power in the society, economic structure etc. So, here 'the unanimity approach' which deals with the arrangement of proper consensus

in the society, seems more relevant and appropriate than other approaches.

The economic factor is not only historical but also ethnic in nature. The domination of trade industry and commerce by the Chinese has made the economic stratification of the Malaysian society sectarian and parochial in nature. Of course, the economic conditions of the society have been affecting the process of national integration in Malaysia the most. The economic interests of various ethnic groups have prompted them to stick to their primary ethnic loyalties. Thus, it may be described that the ethnic problems in Malaysia have their roots in the economic disparities.

The formation of Malaysia in 1963 was, of course, one of the most striking event in the history of the country. But right from the beginning, the ethnic cleavages were quite apparent and obvious. The ethnic problems raised their head from time to time. While the incorporation of Singapore in the Malaysian federation was a unique demonstration of the understanding between the Chinese and the Malays, its expulsion from the Malaysian federation showed the strength of inherent contradictions prevailing in the society, which were enflamed and encouraged by the ethnic cleavages and ethnic divide. The divergence in cultural values, social

fixations, political loyalties and aspirations and economic status had kept the two ethnic groups, the Malays and Chinese separated. Of course, more striking differences were cultural, linguistic and religious in nature. And these differences were so deep and wide that they could not be bridged easily.

Constitution is supposed to be a modern, scientific and civic instrument to bring various diverse groups in a society together. But in Malaysia, the constitution hardly fulfilled this purpose. The provisions relating to language, religion, citizenship and special privileges of the Malays naturally made the non-Malay communities suspicious.

Besides, the demographic structure of Malaysia was also very alarming in the sense that while on the one hand Malays have been always fearful of being reduced to minority in their own homeland, on the other, the Chinese have been indirectly demanding their share in power structure in accordance with their strength.

Apart from these internal factors, some external factors like the opposition of Indonesia and the Philippines mattered much. To Indonesia, the making of Malaysia was not only a neo-colonial activity of the Britishers but it

would also pose a danger to the Indonesian defence. 'Konfrontasi' made the situation in the region very tense. On the other hand, Philippines claim over Sabah made the relation between two countries very cold for some time. So external factors too, hampered much the process of national integration of Malaysia.

For achieving national integration in Malaysia Mahathir Bin Mohamad (the present Prime Minister of Malaysia) has suggested that in a multi-racial country like Malaysia consensus and agreement would be a very suitable way for achieving national unity. Mahathir further suggests, "Every barrier which tends to distinguish between racial, ethnic or other origins must be eliminated ... interracial marriages should be encouraged. These are bases of national unity."¹ Thus, it is clear that for the integration of the Malaysian society emphasis should be laid not only on the inter-ethnic elements but on extra-ethnic elements also.

In the field of economy, while the Chinese have been dominating trade and commerce, the Malays have been dominating agriculture. This sort of economic structure has rendered the Chinese community mainly urban-based and the Malays rural-based. Thus, while Chinese have been availing

1. Mohamad Bin Mahathir, The Malay Dilemma (Singapore, 1970), p. 102.

all benefits which are available in urban areas and have been earning more and more wealth, the Malays have been deprived of these. This has only aggravated the ethnic divide. So, recently, the Malays have also been demanding their share in trade and commerce. Evidently, diverse levels of economic development along ethnic lines did not prove to be conducive to national integration in Malaysia. The Malay demand for an equitable, if not predominant, share in trade and commerce in the country seemed to be on the card.

Ethnic structure of Malaysia was also a disturbing element in the path of national integration of Malaysia. While the Chinese had been very much a major alien ethnic group, the Malays have been asserting their preeminent political position as "bumiputeras" existence from the beginning. The expulsion of Singapore from the Malaysian federation in August 1965 was a major manifestation of the Malays assertion of their primacy. Still, the things were not set in their proper place. Following the 1964 elections which were held on the burning issue of 'Malays Malaysia' versus 'Malaysians' Malaysia', May 13, 1969 incident was the most assertive exhibition of the Malay paramountcy in Malaysia. This incident proved and set to rest for all times to come that if peace and harmony were to be achieved in Malaysia, the Malay paramountcy would have to be established as a social fact.

So far as language is concerned, no doubt, Chinese and Indians had been very sensitive to their languages but for the promotion of national unity. Bahasa Malaysia was being constitutionally promoted. Particularly, after the reports of various committees, the important position of the Malay language had been accepted. The May 1969 incident finally decided this issue as well. Now loyalty to the Bahasa Malaysia is considered loyalty to the Malaysian nation.

To conclude, it may well be said that the process of national integration in Malaysia may be a good example for many newly born Third World countries (who also face ethnic, economic language etc. problems in the process of national-integration of their countries).

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Table 1
**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY COMMUNITY
 AND STATE: PENINSULAR MALAYSIA 1911-1970**

State	Malays		Chinese		Indians	
	1957	1970	1957	1970	1957	1970
Johore	48.0	53.4	42.4	39.4	8.0	6.7
Kedah	67.8	70.6	20.5	19.3	9.8	8.5
Kelantan	91.6	92.4	5.7	5.7	1.3	0.9
Malacca	49.1	51.8	41.5	39.6	8.4	7.9
Negri Sembilan	41.5	45.3	41.2	38.1	16.1	16.2
Pahang	57.2	61.2	34.6	31.3	7.6	7.3
Penang	28.8	30.6	57.2	56.3	12.4	11.6
Perak	39.7	43.0	44.1	42.4	15.3	14.3
Perlis	78.4	79.1	17.4	16.4	1.8	2.0
Selangor	28.8	34.5	48.2	46.4	21.4	18.3
Trengganu	92.1	93.7	6.5	5.5	1.1	0.7
Peninsular Malaysia	49.8	53.1	37.2	35.5	11.7	10.6

Source: R. Chander, ed., *Population Census of Malaysia, 1970*, Kuala Lumpur, Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia, April 1977, vol. 1, p. 272.

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Kelantan	91.6	92.4	5.7	5.7	1.3	0.9
Malacca	49.1	51.8	41.5	39.6	8.4	7.9
Negri Sembilan	41.5	45.3	41.2	38.1	16.1	16.2
Pahang	57.2	61.2	34.6	31.3	7.6	7.3
Penang	28.8	30.6	57.2	56.3	12.4	11.6
Perak	39.7	43.0	44.1	42.4	15.3	14.3
Perlis	78.4	79.1	17.4	16.4	1.8	2.0
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Source: R. Chander, ed., *Population Census of Malaysia, 1970*, Kuala Lumpur, Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia, April 1977, vol. 1, p. 272.

Table 2 RACIAL COMPOSITION BY STATE
BY PERCENTAGES, 1970

<i>State</i>	<i>Malays</i>	<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Indians</i>
Trengganu (405,539) *	93.9	5.4	0.6
Kelantan (686,266)	92.8	5.3	0.8
Perlis (120,991)	79.4	16.2	2.0
Kedah (954,749)	70.7	19.3	8.4
Pahang (504,900)	61.2	31.2	7.3
Malacca (404,135)	51.8	39.6	7.8
Johore (1,276,969)	53.4	39.4	6.7
Negri Sembilan (481,491)	45.4	38.1	16.1
Perak (1,569,161)	43.1	42.5	14.2
Penang ** (775,440)	30.7	56.1	11.5
Selangor ** (1,630,707)	34.6	46.3	18.3

Source: 1970 Population and Housing Census of Malaysia, Community Groups, Table XIV, p. 32, and Table I, p. 45.

Notes: * The numbers in parentheses indicate the population of the state. The percentages are read horizontally as proportions of the total state population comprised by each ethnic group.
** The States of Penang and Selangor contain, respectively, the cities of George Town and Kuala Lumpur, the sites of the field research.

Table 3. Population by ethnic groups, Malaysia, 1968

	Malays	Chinese	Indians ^a	Others ^b	All ethnic groups
West Malaysia					
Perak	687,404	739,905	248,167	26,397	1,701,873
Selangor	443,875	698,492	286,607	48,561	1,477,535
Johore	675,450	544,720	100,638	31,697	1,352,505
Kedah	655,279	193,610	90,927	24,129	963,945
Penang	225,706	443,254	92,923	16,864	778,747
Kelantan	644,458	38,837	8,329	11,858	703,482
Negeri Sembilan	225,724	211,892	80,216	12,950	530,782
Pahang	254,652	152,454	32,868	5,505	445,479
Malacca	216,616	168,201	34,677	8,650	428,144
Trengganu	365,004	23,545	4,832	1,290	394,671
Perlis	93,945	21,821	2,203	3,898	121,867
Total	4,488,113	3,236,731	982,387	191,799	8,899,030
East Malaysia					
Sabah ^d	e	135,710	e	486,770	622,480
Sarawak ^d	170,698	309,610	e	453,301	933,609
Total	e	445,320	e	940,071	1,556,089
Total state of Malaysia	e	3,682,051	e	1,131,870	10,455,119

^a Includes those who originally came from Ceylon and what is now Pakistan.

^b Mainly Eurasians, Europeans, Australians, New Zealanders, Americans, Arabs, Thais, etc.

^c Not available.

^d Estimated Population at Mid 1968 + Migration surplus + Excess of Births over Deaths.

^e Included under "Others."

SOURCE: Malaysia, *Annual Bulletin of Statistics, Malaysia 1969* (Kuala Lumpur: Department of Statistics, 1970).

Table 4 ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION
PERCENTAGES BY RACIAL GROUP
AND OCCUPATION, 1957

Industry	(N = 1,023,729)	(N = 771,963)	(N = 312,956)
	Malays	Chinese	Indians
Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting, and Fishing	45.0	13.1	1.4
Estate Agriculture	28.2	27.2	54.3
Mining and Quarrying	1.0	5.2	2.2
Manufacturing	2.6	12.6	3.5
Building and Construction	2.2	4.2	3.9
Electricity, Gas, and Water	0.4	0.4	1.3
Commerce	3.1	16.5	10.4
Transportation, Storage, and Communication	2.6	3.8	5.1
Services	12.5	14.2	15.4
Unspecified or Inadequately Described	0.6	1.2	0.8
Unemployed but Looking for Work	1.9	1.7	1.8

Source: 1957 Population Census, Report No. 14, adapted from Table No. 12, pp. 111-22.

Table 5

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF MALAYA'S POPULATION
FROM 1921 TO 1970 BY PERCENTAGES

Racial Group	(N = 2,907,000) 1921	(N = 3,788,000) 1931	(N = 4,908,000) 1947	(N = 6,279,000) 1957	(N = 8,039,000) 1965	(N = 8,810,348) 1970
Malays	54.0	49.2	49.5	49.8	50.1	53.2
Chinese	29.4	33.9	38.4	37.2	36.8	35.4
Indians	15.1	15.1	10.8	11.3	11.1	10.6
Others	1.5	1.8	1.3	1.8	2.0	0.8

Sources: 1957 Population Census, Report No. 14, adapted from Table 1.3, p. 3; estimates from *Monthly Statistical Bulletin of the States of Malaya*, September 1966; and 1970 Population and Housing Census of Malaysia, Community Groups, Table VI, p. 27.

Table 6 RACIAL COMPOSITION OF URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION BY PERCENTAGES

<i>Type of Area</i>	<i>Malays</i>	<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Indians</i>
Urban—10,000 population + (N = 2,530,433) (28.7%)	27.6	58.5	12.8
Rural—less than 10,000 population (N = 6,279,915) (71.3%)	63.5	26.2	9.7

Source: 1970 Population and Housing Census of Malaysia, Community Groups, adapted from Table XI, p. 30.

Note: The proportions are read from left to right. For example, 27.6 percent of the urban residents are Malays, 58.5 percent are Chinese, and 12.8 percent are Indians. Altogether, 28.7 percent of the population live in urban areas.

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